NEA Today
September 1996
Vol. 15, No. 2
Washington, D.C.
A Newspaper for Members of the National Education Association

Talk Back!

Tired of school bashing? Frank Mosher helps colleagues make the case for public education

See page 4

NEA Today

September 1996
Volume 15, Number 2

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NEA Today (ISSN 0734-7219) is published nine times a year, monthly, October, November, January, February, March, April, May, and biweekly in September by the National Education Association, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036-3290.

Periodicals postage paid at Washington, DC., and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to NEA Membership Records, Attn: *NEA Today* Address Change, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Telephone: 202/822-7207.

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Together, Let Us Achieve Big Things!

President's Viewpoint

Looking ahead to the challenges of being NEA president, I feel like a first-year teacher again, with the same ambitious plans, the same sense of possibilities. But there's a difference.

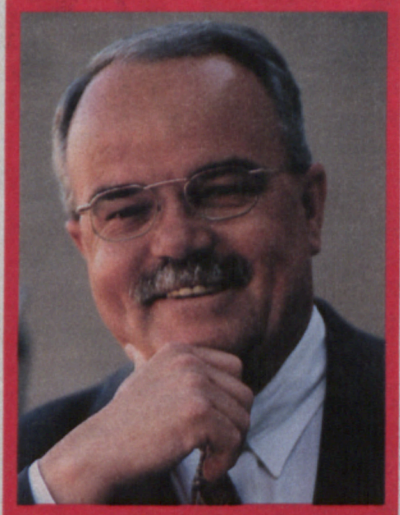
Thirty-four years have passed since my rookie year in the classroom. And the wisdom of those years teaches me that, in a very real sense, assuming the presidency of NEA is everything — and it is nothing. Because leadership is not about position, it is about action. Our task is to move this great Association forward in bold, creative, and, if necessary, uncomfortable directions.

Fortunately, we build on a solid foundation. Thanks to Keith Geiger's superb leadership during the last seven years, NEA has grown by 300,000 members and has rallied to a single strategic focus: to restore public confidence in public education.

But today's crisis of confidence in public education requires that we move forward even more aggressively. At the Representative Assembly in July, I set forth five priorities to guide our Association's activities:

■ Advancing NEA's agenda of school renewal. No one knows our public schools better than we do. But if we fail to lead the school renewal debate, then groups with dubious agendas will fill the vacuum. Change must be something done by us and with us, not to us.

■ Forging new alliances in our communities. In addition to reaching out to parents and our traditional allies, we need to connect with the 75 percent of adults who don't currently have children in our public schools. Local businesses, civic organizations, and mainstream religious groups are usually eager to support public schools — if they are asked.



Joe Di Dio

Bob Chase

■ Building a "new unionism," with contracts that empower and enable our members in new ways. We will keep fighting for raises, rights, and respect for every education employee. But we also need a stronger professional voice in setting the course for our schools.

■ Redoubling the responsiveness of NEA headquarters to the needs of local and state affiliates. Our Association must be strongest where it counts the most. And this means maximizing the effectiveness of NEA's state and local organizations, which have the most direct impact on our members' lives.

■ Rededicating ourselves to the human and civil rights of all Americans, whatever their color, gender, faith, or sexual orientation. This will always be the bedrock commitment of our Association.

In addition, I want to summon NEA members to a new spirit of boldness, risk-taking, and creativity. Instead of "We can't do that, we've never done that before," let us be open-minded and courageous in considering every new possibility.

The times do not allow us to choose a safe, risk-free road. Nor do the times allow talented, thoughtful NEA members to sit on the sidelines. I invite — I urge — you to become actively involved as we continue to build a new NEA.

To tap your ideas, I look forward to consulting with many of you face-to-face. Indeed, one of my priorities is not just to "visit" your schools, but actually to spend a day teaching in your classrooms as frequently as possible. This is my way of connecting — keeping in touch with the real world, your world.

In turn, please don't be shy about communicating directly with me. You can reach me by letter, or via E-mail at BobChase@nea.org. I'll try to respond personally to as many messages as possible. And on matters where many of you are expressing similar concerns, I'll respond in future *NEA Today* columns and in other forums.

While I pledge to do my very best, even my best won't be enough without your own hard work in thousands of schools and communities. I will be calling upon you to do big things. Together we will make a very real difference. That is my promise.

NEA at a Glance

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Did You Know?

NEA has more than 14,000 local affiliates, and NEA members live in every one of the nation's 435 congressional districts. NEA members include more than 2.2 million teachers, education support personnel, higher education faculty, and students. In the last year alone, the ranks of NEA education support members grew by more than 9,000.

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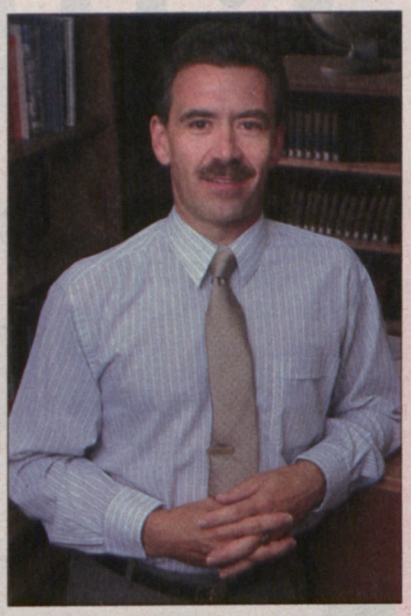
NEA Today this Month

A New Look

Welcome to the new *NEA Today*. Rest assured, the "look" isn't the only thing that's new. Inside you'll find your favorite features, but we've added lots more—all for the sole purpose of helping you do the best possible job for America's public school students. Let us know what you think.



Cover Story

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Tired of loudmouths who bad-mouth public education? This cover story gives you the ammo you need to join Colorado NEA member Frank Mosher in defending America's public schools. Look on pages 4, 5, and 6 for the arguments, statistics, and resources that can help you become an outspoken advocate of public education.

Cover photo by Joe Mahoney

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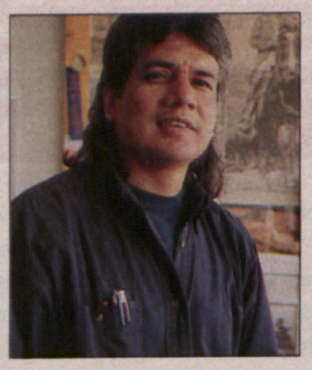

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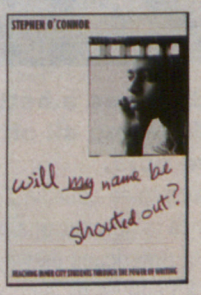

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NEA members tell 2.2 million colleagues how they really feel. Plus, a letter from Washington State delegates to the NEA RA.

Tired of loudmouths who badmouth public education? Take a tip from NEA member Frank Mosher . . .

Talk Back!

Picture the scene. You're waiting on a supermarket checkout line. Or talking with neighbors at a backyard barbeque. Or listening to a talk radio show. Suddenly, your ears prick up. Some know-it-all is complaining about the "failure" of America's public schools.

What do you do? Do you squirm and silently seethe? Or do you set the record straight—like Colorado high school teacher Frank Mosher?

Frank Mosher "talks back" to critics of public education, wherever and whenever the opportunity arises. But you'll never find him in a shouting match. For this 48-year-old media specialist, "talking back" isn't about going toe-to-toe. It's about building dialogue and understanding.

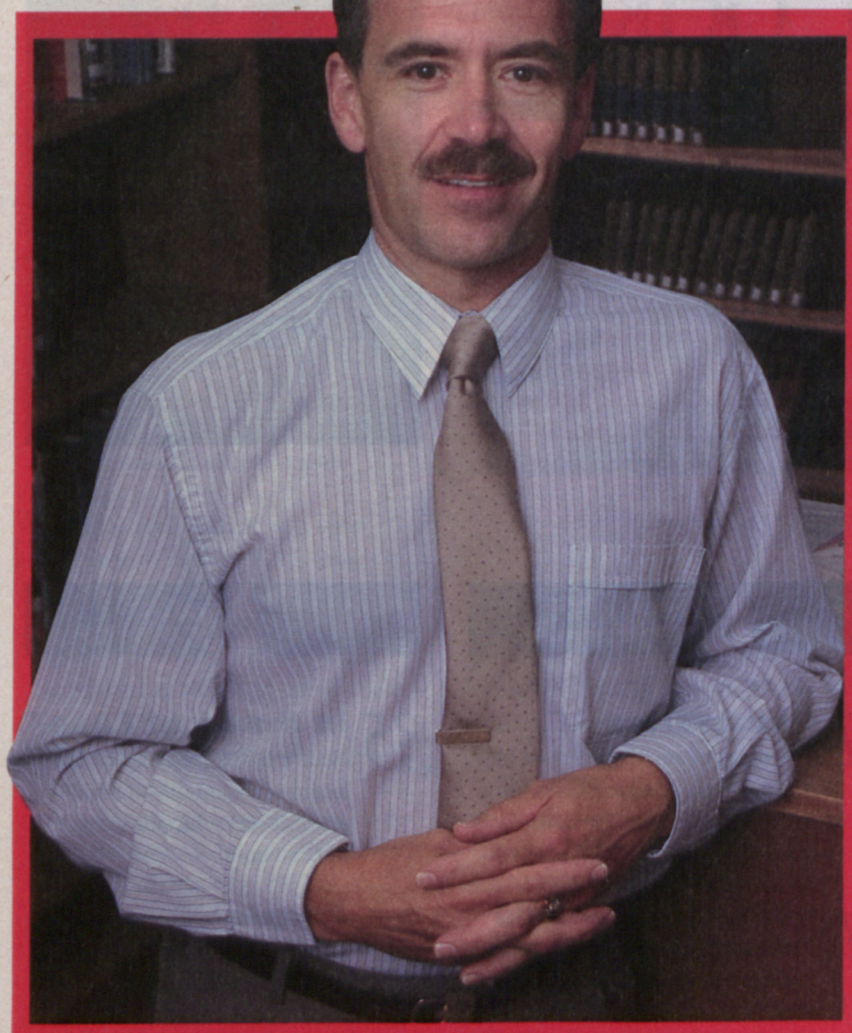
"I don't confront," says Mosher. "I never denigrate another's beliefs or religion."

What Mosher does do is listen and ask questions. If he hears someone recount a horror story about a public school, he'll ask that someone where the information came from.

"I ask for specific instances," says Mosher, "because you don't know if a person's discontent is personal or just a repetition of what the person heard secondhand."

Colorado Springs, Mosher's community, is teeming with secondhand horror stories about public education. The city is home to some 35 organizations that exploit hot-button issues like school prayer and sex education to discredit public schools.

Mosher remembers the first time he "talked back" against these groups and their bogus horror stories. A local group was charging that the Bible had been banned from Mosher's school, Coronado High.



Joe Mahoney

"I never thought of myself as a great public speaker. But then I realized that we speak every day in front of students. We ask ourselves, 'How can I reach these kids?' Now I ask myself the same question when I'm dealing with critics of public education."
— Frank Mosher, high school teacher, Colorado Springs

"A local television station came over, asking if religious books, especially the Bible, were available in the school library," says Mosher.

Mosher smiled, took the TV crew over to the library shelves, pulled out the library's many versions of the Bible, a copy of the Koran, and a stack of other religious books—about 60 volumes in all. The reporters, explains Mosher, were "quite astounded."

Explained Mosher to the TV crew—and the broader viewing audience: "The whole purpose of a library is to present various points of view."

To help counter half-truths and untruths about public education, Mosher is working with the Citizens Project, a local community organization that's doing its best to chase down rumors.

"I'll be the first to admit schools have problems," Mosher says. "But if you're going to criticize, you should know what's actually going on in the schools."

The Citizens Project is currently running a program called "Food for Thought." Once a month, this effort invites local residents with opposing views to a dinner where they can sit down together and discuss ideas and issues.

"This is one way we're fostering civil discourse," Mosher says, "and it's working."

Mosher considers this discourse the first key step toward the real goal: actively involving local residents in the work of improving local public schools.

The NEA local affiliate in Colorado Springs is doing just that—by working side by side with parents and other local residents to start a "charter school" (see page 18 for more on charter schools).

"This is necessary work," says Frank Mosher. "Many people want to be involved with the schools, but don't know how to go about it. We can help."

— Steve Lemken

Facts To Keep at Your Fingertips

No country does a better job at educating all citizens than ours.
When it comes to an educated populace, America is number one. Over 84 percent of Americans between the ages of 25 and 64 have completed their secondary education. Only 70 percent of the population can make that claim in Japan, 68 percent in the United Kingdom, and 52 percent in France.

Students are taking more demanding courses than ever before.
In 1982, only 29 percent of American kids took both algebra II and geometry. One decade later, over half our students were taking both. Student enrollment at every level of math, including calculus, is up. The number of students in remedial math classes, meanwhile, is down, from 32.5 percent in 1982 to 15.4 percent today.

Spending to educate average students has increased minimally over the last quarter century.
Spending on regular education—as opposed to special and vocational education—has increased just 28 percent over the past 25 years. That "increase" averages out to an annual spending boost of just over 1 percent.

Salaries in education are barely even with inflation.
School staff salaries have done little more than match inflation in recent years. Between 1985-86 and 1995-96, teacher salaries beat inflation by less than one-half percent per year. Over the same period, the national bus driver hourly rate actually fell 0.3 percent per year.
Sources: See page 6 for the places you can find the facts that matter.

Countering the Canards

Ever wonder what America's most articulate advocates of public education say when they hear someone running down public schools? We do. So we asked them.

The canard: Public schools aren't as good as they used to be.

By what measure? Test score trends for the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (grades 3-8) and Iowa Tests of Educational Development (9-12) show scores falling from about 1965 to about 1975, then rising to all-time highs around 1988. They remain at those highs today.

The number of students taking Advanced Placement tests has soared from 98,000 in 1978 to 463,000 in 1995. Even the SAT, usually taken as the number one indicator of declining school quality, has been rising, if one considers the demographic changes in who has been taking the SAT.

The original SAT standards were set on 10,654 white kids living in the Northeast and planning to go to Ivy League and Seven Sisters colleges. Forty percent were in private, college-prep high schools. In the current crop of SAT takers, 29 percent report family incomes of $30,000 or under.

Gerald Bracey, author, "Bracey Report on the Condition of Public Education" in Phi Delta Kappan

In every decade of this century, serious critics have argued that schools aren't as good as they used to be. If each decade's critics were correct, we'd be forced to the absurd proposition that schools today are worse than those of the turn of the century, schools that few attended for more than a few grades.

Of course, the fact that in most generations critics have been wrong doesn't necessarily mean they are wrong today, but it should give us pause before we too quickly embrace the "declining school quality" story.

It is very difficult to get reliable evidence on education "then and now," because the curricular goals of schooling change, the types of students change, and there are few tests given to a representative group of students in the past that could be re-administered to a similar group today.

The most widely cited test series in recent years has been the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). And, both before and after adjusting for different types of pupils then and now, NAEP results show student achievement mostly stable over the last quarter century, with greater improvements in results for minority students. We would be better advised to develop realistic outcome goals for schools today than to chase a groundless vision of schools in a mythical golden past.

Richard Rothstein, research associate, Economic Policy Institute, and professor, Occidental College, California

"We have dollars pumped into our school system for physical and mental disabilities. What hasn't been funded are programs for children with what I call social disabilities. We have whole communities where people aren't working. There's a direct impact between growing up in these communities and how children see themselves and their educational experience."
— C.J. Prentiss, Ohio state legislator

The canard: Spending on public schools has gone way up, and we have nothing to show for it.

The statement that funding has gone up is correct. Funding for public education has substantially increased within the last 20 years. The question is, how have we spent the increased money? The amount spent on ordinary children has declined as part of the overall budget. We are spending the increase on special purposes such as the education of disabled children, school lunches, vocational education, and other services.

The issue is this: If we want the schools to undertake all types of responsibilities, are we providing money for those responsibilities as well as educating ordinary children? We are not doing that.

Jack Jennings, director, Center on National Education Policy

Bob Riha, Jr.

"Public schools work every day to provide equity, excellence, and opportunities for all children. We serve more students, more languages, more diversity than ever before. Let's stop looking at the past and see where we can go in the future. We don't want to be just as good as we were last year, we want to be better."
— Sandy McBrayer, San Diego, 1994 National Teacher of the Year

To some critics, the important data are found in international comparisons, and there, they claim, we look awful. But this is not true. For example, American students were second in reading in one comparison of 31 countries.

Also, while American rankings have often been low, American scores have been fine. For instance, American 13-year-olds in science got 67 percent of answers right on an international test, ranking them thirteenth of 15 nations. If they had scored only 5 percent more, they would have ranked fifth.

Gerald Bracey

Comparing spending over time is difficult because such measurement requires adjusting for inflation, and this is more complicated than most people realize.

Accounts of dramatic increases in per pupil spending are based on inappropriate adjustments for inflation—utilizing the consumer price index for urban consumers, as if the "market basket" of groceries, clothing, and housing purchased by typical urban consumers was similar to the "market basket" of teachers and textbooks purchased by schools.

Because technological advances have been more rapid in manufacturing than in the delivery of human services like education, schools have confronted more rapid inflation than consumers, and, in consequence, "real" school spending has gone up less than commonly believed.

Richard Rothstein

The canard: Private schools produce better results than public schools—with less money.

Private schools can do a very good job, but so can public schools. *Money* magazine advises that good suburban schools are a better buy than private schools, and at least one study has shown that urban public magnet schools raise achievement better than private schools.

The issue ought to be how do we make all public schools as good as the best public schools, because the vast majority of kids will continue to be in public schools.

Private schools today enroll about 11 percent of the school population, and they will be hard-pressed to even double that number within 10 years.

Most children will attend public schools for many years to come. Our job is to make those schools the best they can be.

Jack Jennings

There is no reliable evidence to support a claim that private schools produce better results than public schools, because private schools can select their student bodies, and because parents who choose to send their children to private schools are, on the whole, more educationally oriented than typical parents whose children attend their local public schools.

Even comparisons of the achievement of public and private school children who are similar in conventional socioeconomic characteristics do not take account of these selection factors.

What little evidence is available suggests that private schools do no better in educating similar students who attend public schools.

Richard Rothstein

Basic Reading List

The Manufactured Crisis: Myths, Fraud and the Attack on America's Public Schools
David C. Berliner and Bruce Biddle, Addison-Wesley, 1995

Where's the Money Gone? Changes in the Level and Composition of Education Spending
Richard Rothstein with Karen Hawley Miles, Economic Policy Institute, 1995 (202/775-8810)

Final Exam: A Study of the Perpetual Scrutiny of American Education
Gerald Bracey, TECHNOS Press of the Agency for Instructional Technology, 1995 (800/457-4509)

The Power of Their Ideas: Lessons for America from a Small School in Harlem
Deborah Meier, Beacon Press, 1995

Possible Lives: The Promise of Public Education in America
Mike Rose, Houghton-Mifflin, 1995

Tinkering Toward Utopia: A Century of Public School Reform
David Tyack and Larry Cuban, Harvard University Press, 1995

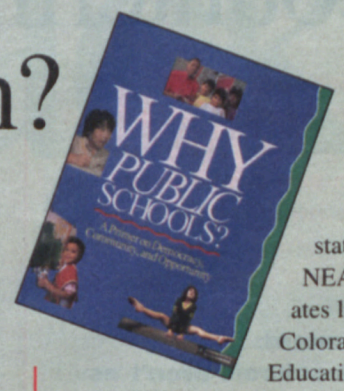
Selling Out Our Schools: Vouchers, Markets and the Future of Public Education
Single copies $5, bulk orders available. Contact: *Rethinking Schools*, 1001 E. Keefe Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53212, 800/669-4192. E-mail: Barbaramin@aol.com or RSBusiness@aol.com.

"Why Private Schools Are Rarely Worth the Money"
Denise Topolnicki, *Money* magazine, October 1994. Survey shows public schools are every bit as good—if not better—than private ones.

"100 Top Schools in Towns You Can Afford"
Denise Topolnicki, *Money* magazine, January 1996. Survey spotlights high-quality school districts.

"The Good News About Our Schools"
Nick Gallo, *Better Homes and Gardens*, March 1996. Time to set the record straight.

Ready to Speak Up For Public Education?



Some resources that can help

Want to become a more effective advocate for public education? NEA can help—at both the state and national levels.

NEA's Center for the Preservation of Public Education, based in Washington, D.C., is circulating a wide range of materials that can help NEA members speak up and talk back. The center's comprehensive guidebook—a manual entitled "The People's Cause: Mobilizing for Public Education"—is available at NEA state affiliate and local UniServ offices throughout the country.

For more info, contact: NEA Center for the Preservation of Public Education, Sheila Simmons, director, 202/822-7381.

The NEA homepage on the World Wide Web also offers some great resources and opportunities for helping your community better understand what's really going on in America's schools. The site, for instance, features links to schools where staff and students are going online to spotlight their work and achievements—for the world to see.

To reach the NEA Web site, steer your Internet-surfing neighbors to http://www.nea.org.

Not everyone in your community may be able to surf in cyberspace, but most everyone does have a TV. *School Stories*, the weekly series co-produced by NEA and The Learning Channel, will appear every Sunday, starting October 13, at 12:30 p.m. EST. Each episode will highlight the real-life stories of teachers and other school staffers who are turning kids on to learning. Check your local cable listings for details.

School Stories is a new series that builds on the success of *Teacher TV*, also a co-production of NEA and The Learning Channel. All the previous episodes of *Teacher TV* are available through the NEA Professional Library. Call 800/229-4200 for details.

Also available through the NEA Professional Library is a 16-page, four-color pamphlet that makes a clear, compelling case for public education. *Why Public Schools?* originally appeared as an insert in *NEA Today*. Sets of this brochure, in boxes of 250 copies, are now available at $35 per box. Write NEA Professional Library, P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06515-9904 or call 800/229-4200.

At the state level, NEA affiliates like the Colorado Education Association are pioneering some new programs based on the notion that every school staffer is a potential "PR" person for quality public schools.

"Our initiative—the Education Ambassador Program—helps all school employees look at how they interact with the public," says Colorado staffer Jim Lang. "We want to positively impact public perceptions about public schools."

For information about the Ambassador Program, contact: Jim Lang, CEA, 1500 Grant St., Denver, CO 80203. For materials and programs offered in your area, contact your NEA state affiliate office.

Fortunately, NEA does not stand alone in the fight to preserve and strengthen public schools. A broad variety of organizations are working to counter attacks on public education and build support for the concept of free, universal public education. A short list of these groups appears in the sidebar below.

Organizations Advancing the Ideals of Public Education

Americans United for the Separation of Church & State
1816 Jefferson Place, N.W., Washington, DC 20036, 202/466-3234. Publishes monthly newsletter, *Church and State.*

American Library Association
50 East Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611, 312/944-6780. Addresses censorship, curricula, legal decisions. Publishes *Newsletter On Intellectual Freedom.*

Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith
823 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017, 212/490-2525. Combats bigotry and racism.

Center for Democratic Renewal
P.O. Box 50469, Atlanta, GA 30302, 404/221-0025. E-mail: cdr@igc.apc.org. Coalition fighting hate-group activity.

Center on National Education Policy
1001 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Suite 310, Washington, D.C. 20036, 202/822-8065. Monitors the national interest in education reform.

Electronic Policy Network
An Internet clearinghouse that features useful articles from a variety of public policy think tanks and publications. The Web address: http://epn.org.

Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting
130 W. 25th St., New York, NY 10001, 212/633-6700. Internet: http://www.fair@fair.org. Media watchdog with a wide range of resources.

National Coalition Against Censorship
275 Seventh Ave., New York, NY 10001, 212/807-6222. Monitors and fights censorship attempts.

Institute for First Amendment Studies
P.O. Box 589, Great Barrington, MA 01230, 413/274-3786. Publishes a bimonthly newsletter that defends First Amendment freedoms.

People for the American Way
2000 M St., N.W., Suite 400, Washington, DC 20036, 202/467-4999. E-mail: pfaw@pfaw.org. Internet: http://www.pfaw.org. Publishes a variety of publications and reports.

Political Research Associates
120 Beacon St., Suite 202, Somerville, MA 02143, 617/661-9313. Internet: http://www.publiceye.org/pra/. Analyzes activities of anti-public education organizations.

Beyond the Call

He Didn't Run Alone

When NEA member Herb Tolbert ran with the Olympic torch, an entire school district ran with him.

Cross-country and track coach Herb Tolbert "doesn't show his emotions—he's a typical coach," reports a student athlete at Maryland's Gaithersburg High School.

But when this NEA member got his chance in June to carry the Olympic torch in Washington, D.C.—part of a 15,000-mile relay to Atlanta for the start of the 1996 Summer Games—he was smiling, waving, and absolutely "overwhelmed" by what he witnessed.

As he exited the relay sponsor's bus in front of the Jefferson Memorial and touched his torch to that of the preceding runner, Tolbert saw friends, relatives, students, and a busload of co-workers waiting to cheer him on.

Their "Go Mr. Tolbert!" chants, signs, and T-shirts were inspiration enough. But then the crowd broke ranks and started jogging alongside its hero.

Tolbert was stunned.

"How do I deserve friends like this?" he recalls thinking. "I'm nobody, and yet these people got up early in the morning to spur me on!"

This guidance counselor, however, is *somebody* to fellow members of the Montgomery County Education Association.

In a successful "Torch for Tolbert" campaign organized by high school science teacher Don McComb, hundreds of staffers and students—in 10 Gaithersburg schools—individually entered Tolbert's name in a lottery to bear the Olympic torch.

McComb's campaign snowballed, enlisting the support of the school board, mayor, and city council, and blitzing Gaithersburg High with "Go Mr. Tolbert" signs, P.A. announcements, and T-shirt days.

What makes Herb Tolbert so special?

Gaithersburg High science teacher Trevella Foster says: "Herb's always interested in the kids, always smiling and willing to help students and teachers. He's a very fine guidance counselor."

photo

Joe Di Dio

Maryland NEA member Herb Tolbert carries the Olympic torch for one kilometer, spurred on by students and colleagues chanting, "Go, Mr. Tolbert."

Adds history teacher Bill Romack, "He takes kids who don't know how to run and turns them into runners."

At 49, Tolbert is one of the top-ranked runners for his age in the Washington, D.C. area. His best time in the Boston Marathon: 2 hours and 33 minutes.

He wasn't always that good, and he reminds his young athletes of that fact.

"I got my confidence from running and learned a lot about myself," the coach says. "I wish more kids would give themselves a chance.

"Running is simple," says Tolbert. "You just have to put in the time, and you'll get results."

Tolbert starts his kids out slowly, runs along with them, and doesn't force things. "When they finally get hooked, it's easy!" he says.

"Everybody wants to be good at something. To say, 'I can run 10 miles' or 'I ran a race and got through it,' you've got to feel good."

Tolbert then tries to "build on that confidence to make these kids better people." And in 23 years of coaching, he concludes, most of his kids "feel better about themselves."

What better reason to pass this man the Olympic torch?

Many other NEA members carried the torch to Atlanta. Among them: Clarinda Brueck (New Jersey), Mary Gerni (Delaware), Chester Greene and Carol Krider (Ohio), Henry Grubb (Missouri), Suzanne Horst (Arizona), Ingrid Howard (New Hampshire), Scollie Keith (California), Jeanne Kemp (Iowa), Jim Kubik (Nebraska), Terry Kuroda and Nancy McCoy (Idaho), Susan McFarland (Utah), Genard Medley (Georgia), Robert O'Connor (Connecticut), and Joe Schrag (Kansas).

Heroes & Zeroes

History teacher Jack Williamson put his mettle to the pedal for public education this summer. The Missouri NEA member biked 1,200 miles from Jefferson City to the Representative Assembly in Washington, D.C., promoting public education in the media coverage he received all along the way.

Joe Di Dio

Make room, Joe Camel. Seagram's has broken the long-standing self-imposed industry ban on distilled-liquor ads for TV and radio. Its new TV campaign for Crown Royal whiskey uses a graduation theme and plays "Pomp and Circumstance." Nothing like teenagers knocking back a fifth to celebrate that diploma, hmm?

Giving it her all—then giving it all away. Oseola McCarty of Mississippi spent 75 years washing clothes, saved an astounding $150,000, then gave it to the University of Southern Mississippi for a scholarship fund. "The only thing I regret," she says, "is that I didn't have that much more to give."

Any day now, expect House Majority Whip Tom Delay (R-Tex.) to announce that the Earth doesn't revolve around the Sun. He recently said that working families trying to get by on $4.25 an hour "don't really exist."

Death threats. Hate letters. A voter recall effort. NEA member Corkin F. Cherubini, a school superintendent for Calhoun County, Georgia, was subject to them all when he worked to change his system's "tracking program" (read racially segregated classes). For his brave—and successful—stand, he's received the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation's 1996 Profile in Courage Award.

At the RA

A Boost from NEA-PAC
Delegates to this year's Representative Assembly once again dug deep to contribute to NEA-PAC, NEA's political action arm. Some $700,000 was raised to support pro-education candidates in the upcoming elections. Members of the New Jersey Education Association topped all state affiliates by contributing $44,540.

NEA, AFT Sign 'No-Raid'
Delegates to last year's RA directed NEA to develop a better relationship with the American Federation of Teachers. In a newly signed NEA-AFT pact—valid between January 1, 1997 and May 31, 1998—the parties agree to "promote cooperative relationships between themselves" and "avoid jurisdictional disputes and other organizational rivalry" while merger talks continue.

Time To Rebuild
RA delegates have voted to condemn the burning of African-American churches, and NEA will contribute $25,000 to help rebuild those places of worship. "This is a time to start rebuilding," said Keith Geiger, "so that we can teach students to protect the rights and liberties of all."

Today the Boiler Room...
"Privatization's a disease that rots school buildings," said New Jersey delegate Rich Malizia as he called on NEA to publicize subcontractor abuses. "If these corporate pirates succeed in the lunchroom and boiler room, it won't be long before they succeed in the classroom." Malizia's fellow delegates agreed and put NEA on record against privatization.

Good Bargaining
Georgia delegate David Miller was pleased next year's RA in Atlanta will focus on collective bargaining. Bargaining—a right Georgians don't enjoy—"is, after all, about bringing democracy to where we teach."

Joe Di Dio

NEA delegates engaged in spirited debates during the Representative Assembly, held this July at Washington, D.C.'s Convention Center.

The NEA RA—Textbook Democracy

9,300 delegates debate, then vote, vote, vote.

Some delegates didn't like everything that was passed at NEA's 1996 Representative Assembly. Count among them first-time delegate Jo Anne Wilson, a "lifelong, card-carrying Republican."

But "the children and democracy of this country are safe because of the way decisions are arrived at here at the RA," this Marylander told other delegates as the Representative Assembly drew to a close. "The RA is living proof that we can work together."

A sampling of convention business:

■ In a secret ballot, delegates elected several new NEA officers (see box at right) and voted—by 7,264 to 679—to recommend President Clinton's candidacy to the membership.

■ In an intense three-hour debate, delegates passed proposed Resolution B-6, which calls on educators to build tolerance and appreciation for diversity, and defeated an amendment to delete the words "sexual orientation" from the examples of differences to be recognized and respected.

The RA also approved an amendment supporting "programs, observances, and curricula that accurately portray and recognize the roles, contributions, and history of . . . diverse groups and individuals."

Last year's NEA resolution on tolerance had been widely attacked by certain groups who claimed that NEA was trying "to impose a homosexual agenda on America's schools."

"The newly adopted resolutions," NEA President Keith Geiger told the media after the debate, "reaffirm NEA's commitment to making sure all students receive a quality education, are treated fairly and with respect, and can learn in a safe environment."

For the full text of resolutions, see the special insert in this issue of *NEA Today*.

■ Delegates rejected "standing rule" amendments that could limit the introduction of new business items. And they approved five constitutional and bylaw amendments, including measures permitting, "under certain stipulated conditions," the affiliation of AFT locals with NEA—while preventing sanctions against NEA state affiliates that choose not to merge or unify with state or regional AFT or AFL-CIO organizations.

■ In action on 44 new business items, delegates called on NEA to, among other things, develop guidelines for parent/community school partnerships, disseminate information on ways to work with students with disabilities, study the "nationwide attack on integration programs," and organize "activities in support of collective bargaining" at the 1997 RA in Atlanta.

RA Selects New Officers

Here are the new NEA officers selected by 1996 RA delegates:

■ **President**—Bob Chase, junior high social studies teacher (Connecticut).

■ **Vice President**—Reg Weaver, junior high science teacher (Illinois).

■ **Executive Committee members**—Lily Eskelsen, grade 4-6 elementary teacher (Utah), and Eddie Davis, high school English teacher (North Carolina).

■ **At-large ESP reps to the Board of Directors**—Three-year positions have been filled by Bill Harrison, maintenance electrician (Texas); Helen Cottongim, bus driver (Kentucky); Cheryl Ann Robinson, secretary (Florida); Michael Graves, custodian (Michigan); and Inez Crawley, senior account technician (Virginia). Program assistant/secretary Yvonne Henning (Wisconsin) will fill a one-year vacancy.

The Bottom Line

Ever wonder why parents don't volunteer more to help out at school? Could be that nobody ever asks them. The Education Department recently quizzed the parents of graduating seniors—only 55 percent said that school staff had ever contacted them about volunteering at school.

Teen smoking rates are up from 27.5 percent in 1991 to 35 percent in 1995. The most likely smokers under age 18: teenage white girls. Some 40 percent of them are now lighting up. Why do all these numbers matter? Eighty-two percent of smoking adults started puffing away before they were 18.

A record 75 percent of today's two-year-olds have already been vaccinated for polio, diphtheria, and whooping cough, a stunning jump from the 55 percent rate for two-year-olds three years ago. Analysts credit the boost to a 70 percent increase in federal immunization aid over the last three years.

New teachers fresh out of college are fiscal realists. Only 5 percent of graduating seniors going into education this fall chose teaching because of its earning potential. By contrast, 37 percent of those in computer science note the potential bucks. New teachers will average $22,125 this fall. The entry average in computing: $34,565.

At the RA

Delegates Focus on the Future

Big names and bigger issues top delegate agenda.

The 9,300 elected NEA delegates gathered in Washington, D.C. during the first week of July had a big agenda—everything from electing a new NEA president to participating in a mass "focus group" on building school-community partnerships.

Along the way, President Bill Clinton paid a visit to accept NEA's annual Friend of Education Award and speak of his efforts to stop congressional cutbacks in federal school aid.

Clinton also outlined new Administration initiatives—a Department of Education "Manual to Combat Truancy" and $10 million in local grants—to "ensure that children are in school and not in the streets."

Delegates cheered as retiring NEA President Keith Geiger urged Association activists to "retool collective bargaining as the great engine" driving school change. And he called on NEA affiliates to fight for contracts that "restore common sense to the 'fair dismissal' process."

Then Geiger, looking back on his career as educator and activist, struck delegates' hearts when he declared simply, "I will always be a teacher—and proud of it."

His successor, Bob Chase—who assumes office September 1—pledged to work hard on initiatives like advancing school renewal, advocating "new unionism with contracts that empower and enable our members," and building "new alliances in our communities."

Delegates got a head start on this alliance-building through a July 4 "focus group" on connecting schools with communities, moderated by ABC News correspondent Rene Pouissant.

Joe Di Dio

"I am not going to tolerate an assault on the fundamental structure of educational opportunity in this country," President Clinton told cheering RA delegates.

Through voting, videos, and drama, delegates worked on analyzing their own attitudes toward outreach beyond school walls. "When communities are willing to support schools, you get more resources," Pouissant reminded them.

But the best arguments for "making connections" came from delegates themselves. They shared anecdotes on everything from parent information centers in Old Bridge, New Jersey to a 300-organization partnership with public schools in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Teachers Take Charge

A new report may mark the beginning of the end for traditional—and lowly regarded—"in-service."

The report, *Teachers Take Charge of Their Learning*, was released July 30 by the NEA-created National Foundation for the Improvement of Education.

This paper, based on extensive input from NEA members, lists several ways educators can "assume responsibility for their own professional development"—including freed-up time, peer assistance, locally developed standards, "induction of novices," and community partnerships.

Outgoing NEA President Keith Geiger announced the report during the RA. Look for details in a future issue.

Don't Lose Hope

"Give hope and listen to students"—those are the educator's main tasks, said 1996 Teacher of the Year Mary Beth Blegen in her RA address. The Minnesota high school teacher urged educators "not to lose hope in kids. You may be the teacher they remember 35 years from now when they say, 'She saw something in me I did not see in myself.'"

NEA Efficient?

On the day of President Clinton's RA visit, many delegates waited up to three hours to get through Secret Service security checks. In contrast, the trip through NEA polling stations was a relative breeze. "The next time the President comes, the Elections Committee should run the security," committee chair Rob McMahon told cheering delegates.

Instant Analysis

"I learned a lot from the Clinton speech," said Los Angeles teacher Cheryl Jones. "I didn't realize how many promises he's kept. I plan to tell all my friends in California about that."

The Partnership Payoff

During the RA special session on community outreach, Sheryl Abshire of the Calcasieu (Louisiana) Association of Educators noted her district's link with the local cellular phone company. "Every school employee now has a cellular phone, voice mail, and a homework class link connection that every parent and child can call," she said. "Grades are improving, parents are integrally involved, and the business community feels a real part of our successes."

Didn't Get to the RA?

Maybe next year. In the meantime, you can get a day-by-day account—and listen to President Clinton's speech—by visiting NEA's RA Web page at http://www.nea.org.ra/.

Minority college registrations are up 5 percent over the previous annual total, says the American Council on Education. But a significant gap remains. Minority students make up 23 percent of high school graduates, but only 16 percent of enrollment at four-year colleges.

More than one in five American youngsters—21 percent—live in poverty. That's the highest child poverty rate in the developed world. Only four other developed nations, says UNICEF, have rates over 10 percent. In Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland, fewer than one child in 20 grows up poor.

Private, profit-making companies have tested poorly. A study conducted at the request of Senators Nancy Kassebaum (R-Kan.) and Arlen Specter (R-Penn.) examined the record of private companies with contracts to manage public schools in Maryland, Florida, Connecticut, and Minnesota. Its finding: no test score improvement.

Outdated textbooks are a standard feature in most U.S. classrooms. Over half of America's teachers—52 percent—say the textbooks used in their classes carry incorrect information. So 71 percent of teachers, says the Association of American Publishers, spend their own money on school materials.

At the National Level

Dole, GOP Rank-and-File Disagree on Education

In July, delivering his first major policy speech on education, Republican Presidential candidate Bob Dole has given low marks to U.S. public education and endorsed tax-supported private school tuition vouchers.

Dole's views appear out of step with those of grassroots Republicans across the country. A recent survey of 1,000 Republicans—commissioned by NEA and conducted by the same firm that polls for the Dole campaign—found overwhelming support among rank-and-file Republicans for public education.

Among the poll findings:

- 79 percent favor "maintaining or increasing" funding for federal education programs.
- 53 percent "strongly" feel that tax dollars should only be spent on public schools.
- 54 percent are opposed to abolition of the Department of Education, citing such factors as the need for "oversight" of states.

On July 17, candidate Dole charged—incorrectly—that the "dividend of billions and billions of dollars invested in education" is "lower test scores, a higher dropout rate, massive remedial education, and an illiteracy rate growing by leaps and bounds."

Moreover, he blasted "the culture of underachievement that pervades our schools" and "educators who display an amazing gift for making simple things complicated."

The following day, Dole offered his "solution": a $5 billion voucher "pilot study" that awards parents "grants" of $1,000 to $1,500 annually to send their children to public, private, or religious schools.

NEA's response to Dole campaign charges against public schools is available on the World Wide Web at http://www.nea.org/info/society.html.

Two Parties, One Message

Joe Di Dio

Wyoming NEA member Jacque Harrod, left, and Oklahoma member Debbie Hogue-Downing were elected as delegates this summer to the Republican and Democratic National Conventions, respectively.

NEA members—Democrats and Republicans—speak out at political conventions.

Some issues just don't carry a party label. High school teacher **Jacque Harrod** opposes private school vouchers and calls for "affordable health care for all, with more emphasis on children's care."

Harrod, who teaches at Worland (Wyoming) High School, is also concerned about cuts in federal Perkins Act funding for vocational education—which have cost her a classroom aide.

"I have 24 kids in my sewing classes and 16 sewing machines," notes this family and consumer sciences teacher. "I can't get to 24 students in a 50-minute period. And there's the safety issue of one adult working alone in a lab setting."

In Shawnee, Oklahoma, fourth grade teacher **Debbie Hogue-Downing** worries about possible cuts in federal Title I and school nutrition programs.

At her school, Jefferson Elementary, children from low-income families benefit from hands-on computer work in small Title I reading classes.

Many of these students, she adds, "need a school breakfast and lunch to better aid their development, both physically and academically."

These two NEA members—the first a Republican, the second a Democrat—care deeply about children and public education. And this summer, Republican Harrod and Democrat Hogue-Downing took their concerns to the Republican and Democratic National Conventions.

They weren't alone. In fact, some 400 other NEA members spoke out for kids and public education as delegates to these conventions.

Harrod, a member of the Wyoming GOP's State Central Committee, wants to "get through to the Republican Party that educators are an important part of the party and that public education has to be a top concern."

Hogue-Downing, who serves on the Democratic State Credentials Committee, works to pointedly remind her party that "politics directly affects my students and profession."

Of course, not every NEA member can speak directly to party movers and shakers. But when damaging education cuts loom in Washington, Hogue-Downing says, "It's important for all educators to write members of Congress and give them specific examples of how the cuts affect their districts."

Does it make a difference?

Consider the federal Fiscal Year 1996 budget, which originally called for a $3.7 billion slash in education funding.

Through thousands of personal letters, phone calls, and petitions, NEA members—and allies in the education community—helped convince members of Congress to limit actual education cuts to $457 million.

The same effort will be needed again. At press time, the House passed a spending bill with education cuts $400 million below FY 1996 levels.

You can be sure that Hogue-Downing and Harrod will be speaking against education cuts within their political parties.

And so should other NEA members.

"Education and children's health are not partisan issues," concludes Harrod. "We have to work together."

The Bottom Line

The number of children ages 6-11 now attending school is up 50 million since 1990, says the World Bank. But 100 million kids are still on the outside looking in. The estimated cost of educating every child: $6 billion—less than 1 percent of the $800 billion the nations of the world now spend on military hardware.

Does federal aid help kids learn? A comprehensive five-year study of the Title I compensatory education program is expected to be released this January. The preliminary finding: Title I has a positive impact. The study is monitoring the progress of 28,000 students in grades 1, 3, and 7.

Over 180 billion sold! The wildly popular school lunch program is now celebrating its 50th fall. Some 25 million school kids get federally subsidized lunches. The subsidy runs from 31 cents a lunch for the 45 percent of students who pay "full price" to $2 for those who qualify for free lunches.

Some politicians like to claim that cutbacks won't hurt the poor because private charities will pick up any slack. Tell that to the private charities. Officials from Catholic Charities recently told a U.S. Senate panel that private giving would have to expand 50 times to replace government support for social services.

In the States

Eileen Connors

These leaders helped gain representation for 88 custodial workers in Las Cruces, New Mexico. From left: Milas Sanchez, Melissa Sanchez, Thomas Sanchez, and Michael LaVertu.

Support Employees Join Up

Membership swells to quarter million.

Seeking decent pay, due process rights, or just plain dignity on the job, 9,600 education support personnel joined NEA between August 31, 1995 and May 31, 1996.

This astounding expansion has boosted membership numbers for NEA support personnel to 257,000. And it's translating into solid gains in states like Kentucky—where last year support workers won due process legislation through grassroots lobbying.

The 1,700-strong Kentucky Education Support Personnel Association—which has recruited more than 400 new members since January—will next use member power to lobby "for stronger language in the due process law, better benefits, and ESP representation on site-based decision-making councils," reports KESPA Vice President Linda Hibbs.

As support personnel organize across the country, they're reaping more benefits:

- Even though they may be suspended or fired without cause, more than 1,000 support employees have joined the South Carolina Education Association, a 50 percent increase over three years.

Newly organized workers are quickly learning—and asserting—their rights. In Cherokee County, for instance, support staffers have won access to the same grievance procedure and sick leave enjoyed by teachers.

And through detailed salary research, custodians and cafeteria employees have persuaded their school board to grant them pay parity with colleagues in neighboring Spartenburg County, among the highest paid support personnel in the state.

Paulette Dukes, an ESP member on the SCEA board of directors, says, "We're now holding leadership seminars for support personnel around the state on how to organize and recruit new members."

- In less than a year, 500 support employees in Puerto Rico—from secretaries to school guards—have joined the Association to tackle issues such as low pay, nonexistent job classifications, and inadequate computer training.

In organizing meetings around the island, the Asociación de Maestros de Puerto Rico is urging support employees to affiliate with—and draw strength from—its existing locals.

- In May, NEA New Mexico and the American Federation of Teachers teamed up to win a representation election for 88 custodial workers in the Las Cruces school district. The vote: a lopsided 53-4.

The custodians, who are now making bargaining preparations, will focus on issues including low pay, unfair treatment, and inconsistent work rules. They may soon have more allies. NEA and AFT will next file for some 600 Las Cruces food service workers and educational assistants.

Size Matters
A California Teachers Association ad campaign designed to focus attention on overcrowded classrooms has paid off. The new budget includes a $771 million appropriation—a bipartisan effort by legislators and Gov. Pete Wilson—to reduce K-3 class size to 20. Notes CTA President Lois Tinson: "Class size is the single most important factor in the success of any classroom. At last, we have a chance to do something about it."

Moving Up in Georgia
To bring Georgia teachers' salaries closer to the national average, Governor Zell Miller has approved a 6 percent increase for this year. That's on top of the 6 percent and 5 percent raises he's okayed in the past two years.

Rewarding the Masters
Mississippi teachers certified by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards will soon receive a $3,000 annual salary supplement, lasting the 10-year life of the certificate. And the state will reimburse them for the cost of achieving "master teacher" status.

Field of Screens
In a major lobbying victory for the Iowa State Teachers Association, Governor Terry Branstad has signed a bill providing $150 million over the next five years for school technology—including hardware, software, and staff development.

Disruptions Limited
Maryland Governor Parris Glendening signed a bill giving local schools greater authority to remove disruptive students. The legislation, drafted with input from the Maryland State Teachers Association, also requires districts to develop a range of programs to maintain discipline.

School buildings in need of major repair or replacement are all too common. Los Angeles residents will vote this fall on a $2.4 billion school bond issue, the largest in the nation's history. The Clinton Administration has proposed a federal program that would cut in half the interest schools pay for bonds to build and fix schools.

School events that at their best bring people together in common bonds—sports, assemblies, and commencements—"could be turned into events that tear people apart" if school prayer were a part of them, said Florida Governor Lawton Chiles last spring, after vetoing legislation authorizing student-led prayer at school events.

The YWCA's second annual "Week Without Violence" starts October 6. Parents who own guns are urged to make sure their weapons are off-limits to children. Some 39 million homes have at least one gun, and, according to a survey of American teens, in 20 percent of these homes guns are never locked away and secured.

Every state now boasts at least one computer for every 17 students. But many schools are counting old, obsolete machines. If only newer computers are counted—those with at least 386 chips—the student-to-computer ratios range from 15:1 in South Dakota to 52:1 in California and 75:1 in Hawaii.

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Jeff Topping

Innovators

Walk a Mile in My Shoes

Joe Di Dio

Innovator:
Kathy Megyeri

Job:
Megyeri is a volunteer coordinator and English teacher at Sherwood High School in Sandy Spring, Maryland. This is her 30th year of teaching.

Bright Idea:
Ninth graders at Sherwood High were reading Harper Lee's *To Kill A Mockingbird* when Megyeri got a call from the owners of a local shoe store. Could her students collect old shoes, which the store would refurbish and donate to Goodwill?

Megyeri agreed, knowing the work would contribute to the 60 hours of community service students are required to log before graduation. But she wondered how best to mix service learning with language arts.

Then she remembered a remark made by *Mockingbird's* narrator: "You never really know a man until you stand in his shoes and walk around in them." Megyeri launched the "Walk In Our Shoes" project.

Not only would students collect the shoes, she decided, they would write about the person who might have worn them. The project produced 150 pairs of shoes and "marvelous" com-positions.

"One student whose uncle died in Vietnam brought in his combat boots and described what he thought might have been his uncle's last day alive," Megyeri says. Sandals provided the fodder for a composition about the "world's greatest surfer" and discarded sneakers the impetus for a story about Michael Jordan.

The compositions were tucked into the refurbished shoes and shipped off to Goodwill. Their final destinations remain a mystery.

Impact:
The project is a natural way to blend learning and service, involve families, and help students relate to literature. It also spurred imaginative writing and produced "proud" students, eager to read their compositions before classmates.

For More:
Contact Kathy Megyeri, Sherwood High School, 300 Olney-Sandy Spring Road, Sandy Spring,

When Reform Begins

Believing in Ourselves: Progress and Struggle in Urban Middle School Reform, *published by The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation.*

"True reform does not flow from wishful thinking, good intentions, or even from a foundation grant. Reform begins when school systems, administrators, and teachers acknowledge, even if only in their hearts, that they have not been as effective as students need them to be. Once educators understand that they and their institutions must change, they take the first step. Only when they actually seek to change, however, do they begin the long journey of school reform. . . .Educators are eager to find new ways to better educate their students. However, teachers need equal measures of leadership, inspiration, and strong support; most of all they need school systems that are focused and efficient. We know that when all of these conditions are present, reform is possible, that it results in schools that are more effective and students who learn more."

Teaching Tough Math

Innovator:
Alfred Ludwig

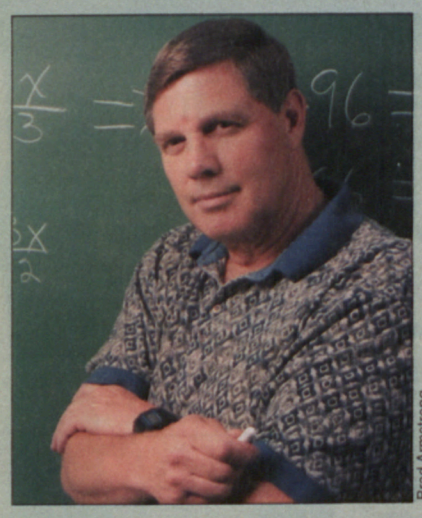
Job:
Ludwig, who describes himself as "someone who had to crawl over math" because of its difficulty, has been teaching math since 1982. He's been at Liberty High School in Colorado Springs for the last nine years, and says, "Math's no longer my enemy. It's my ticket to the good life."

A retired Air Force major who performed math failure analysis for the Air Force Academy Preparatory School, Ludwig holds degrees in business and atmospheric physics.

Bright Idea:
The continued failure of "low-skill, at-risk" high school students in algebra prompted Ludwig, a staunch opponent of tracking, to design a program to help sidelined students re-enter the progressive math curriculum.

The one-semester course Ludwig created to bridge the gap teaches elementary math remediation and strong pre-algebra skills. It begins with student diagnostic assessments and self-evaluations to determine students' weaknesses.

"Often a student having trouble with fractions," says Ludwig, "doesn't know the multiplication tables. A kid stumped on word problems may need help with vocabulary." Teaching these basics assures students success in algebra, he explains.


Brad Armstrong

The course, called Mastery Math-Tough Math (MM-TM), embraces two key concepts:

- All students can learn with proper support and motivation.
- Like "tough love," tougher, not easier, math instruction results in growth and self-esteem.

Impact:
Since its launch in 1988, 600 students at Liberty High School and 4,000 within Colorado have completed the program. Approximately 30,000 students in 27 states have been taught elements of it.

Success rates are high—between 78 and 100 percent. Other teachers at Liberty High School and around the country are now planning to apply many of Ludwig's techniques to their own disciplines.

For More:
To learn more about Mastery Math-Tough Math, teacher workshops, or to order an activity (free as long as funding is available), send an E-mail to Ludwig at TOUGH-MATH @aol.com or contact him at Liberty High School, 8720 Scarborough Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80920, 719/282-1000, FAX 719/282-1006.

Questions for Ted Sizer

Theodore Sizer is a professor emeritus at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, former director of the Annenberg Institute for School Reform, and founder and chair of the Coalition of Essential Schools. He is the author of a trilogy of books about school reform, Horace's Compromise, Horace's School *and his newest and last title in the series,* Horace's Hope.

Q Why is high school reform so difficult to achieve?

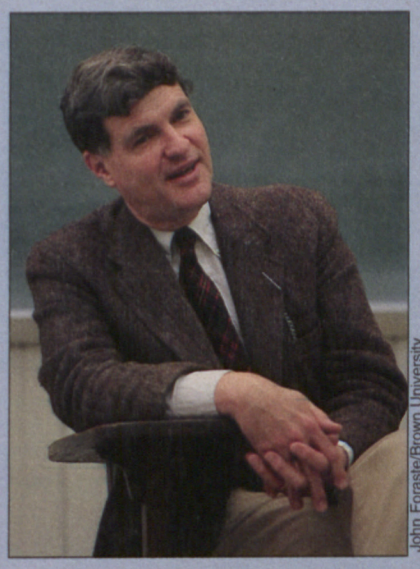
A High schools are very complicated places with all sorts of programs, schedules, and obligations. To change anything involves changing the entire school.

High schools also carry all sorts of symbolic baggage, with graduation being a major point in a student's life. To alter the policy of automatically giving youngsters diplomas at 18—when they should be getting them only after exhibiting mastery of their work—would be running into a hornet's nest.

Q What works for the American high school?

A Human-scale schools are critical. Kids work harder when they know and respect the adults who ask them to work hard and when the adults know them well. And that doesn't happen in big schools unless the schools are broken into small units with real autonomy.

High schools need simplified curriculums. Instead, curriculums are being added to, resulting in an epidemic of superficiality. Schools I admire have been able to narrow their work to the important intellectual core.



John Forasle/Brown University

High schools must insist on higher standards of work where a student's depth of knowledge is demonstrated by portfolios, exhibitions, and oral tests. The assessment system must also change.

The human mind is too complicated to assess its ability with multiple choice questions and one-shot, superficial documents that don't allow for reflection.

Q Is there hope for the American high school?

A There is a greater awareness now than 10 years ago that the problems are very deep. There are more politically influential folks who realize that pushing the existing system and tinkering with it won't work.

If we show politicians what students and faculty are doing and have them shadow kids and teachers for two days, we could cause a revolution.

> "We don't let people become licensed pharmacists because they've spent time in a drugstore...We shouldn't let novices practice trial-and-error teaching on our children."
>
> **David G. Imig**
> **Chief Executive Officer**
> **American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education**

Taking Big Bites

Innovator:
Paula Wyant

Job:
A special education teacher for 14 years, Wyant directs an alternative program for severely emotionally disturbed students in grades 7-12 at The Transition Center in Bloomfield, Connecticut.

Bright Idea:
Wyant had long been interested in introducing 7th and 8th grade students to career opportunities.

While teaching at the Carmen Arace School in Bloomfield, near Hartford, she decided to combine career exploration with student achievement in a program called BITES (Business and Industry Takes Excellence to Lunch).

Students who make the honor roll each quarter are treated to an "executive-type luncheon" by a member of the local business community. After lunch, these students have a chance to tour the company or industry and talk with employees there.

BITES has given students the opportunity to visit a nursing home, factory, retirement community, law firm, an elevator manufacturing company, university, and real estate firm. BITES is now in its seventh year of operation.

Impact:
The number of students on the honor roll doubled during the two years that Wyant directed the program. Youngsters are given opportunities to learn about a variety of careers available in their city. The project continues to build a mutually beneficial partnership between the education and business communities.

For More:
To learn more about BITES, contact Wyant at 203/243-2850 or Carmen Arace School at 860/286-2622.

5 Tips for Integrated Thematic Instruction

1. **Check district requirements.** Before getting started, make sure theme lessons and activities are aligned with your district's academic requirements.
2. **Team teach.** Having someone to help brainstorm ideas is a huge help. It also lessens the workload.
3. **Start small.** It's far less overwhelming if you start with a small, manageable unit and build as you gain confidence and knowledge.
4. **Reach out.** Mine the community for experts, places, and resources that students can use when researching theme activities.
5. **Involve parents.** Brief parents on the theme and accompanying activities so they can reinforce your efforts at home.

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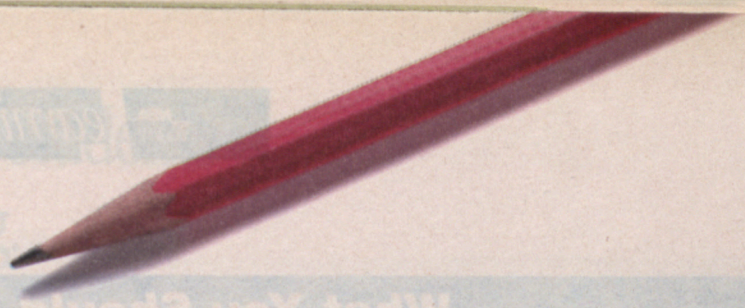


At age 8,

Amy Tan

discovered

a way to

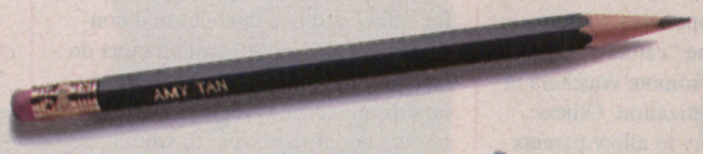
communicate

with the

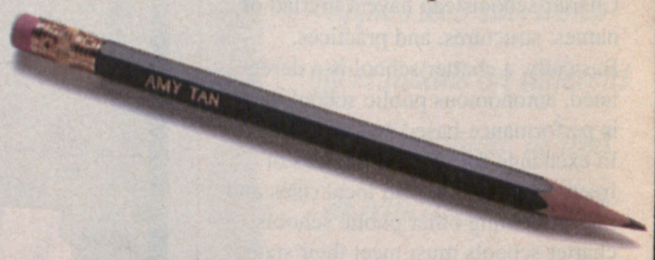
world.

For her eighth birthday, Amy was given a set of beautiful colored pencils. On the pencils, in bright gold, was her name: Amy Tan. To Amy, the pencils seemed magical, for whenever she used them, she wrote very personal, imaginative things.

Years later, Amy also discovered that, by writing about her own culture, she could explain it in terms that people from all backgrounds could understand.



As Amy first learned to communicate with others using her special pencils, students today can use Macintosh® computers.



A Mac™ makes it easy to connect via the Internet with other students all over the world. In the process, they discover a few small differences. But more important, they discover the overwhelming similarities that unite all of us.

Today, more schools are using Apple® Macintosh computers to help students make their own important discoveries.

What You Should Know About

Charter Schools

■ Definition, please.

Charter schools can have a myriad of names, structures, and practices. Basically, a charter school is a deregulated, autonomous public school that is performance-based and site-funded. In exchange for varying degrees of freedom from state and local rules and regs governing other public schools, charter schools must meet their stated student performance goals within the time frame of the charter—from three to five years.

■ How hot?

Very. Between 1991 and 1996, nearly half of all states passed some form of charter school law, and another dozen states will consider the legislation this coming year. Roughly 250 charter schools are now up and running.

■ Why bother?

With roughly half the states on board the charter bandwagon, it's likely the charter concept will be with us for some time.

Some charter proponents want to use these laws as the "camel's nose under the tent" to promote vouchers or other forms of privatization. Others see charters as a way to allow parents more choices within the public school system. Still others note that chartering a school can give professional educators genuine control over their work environment.

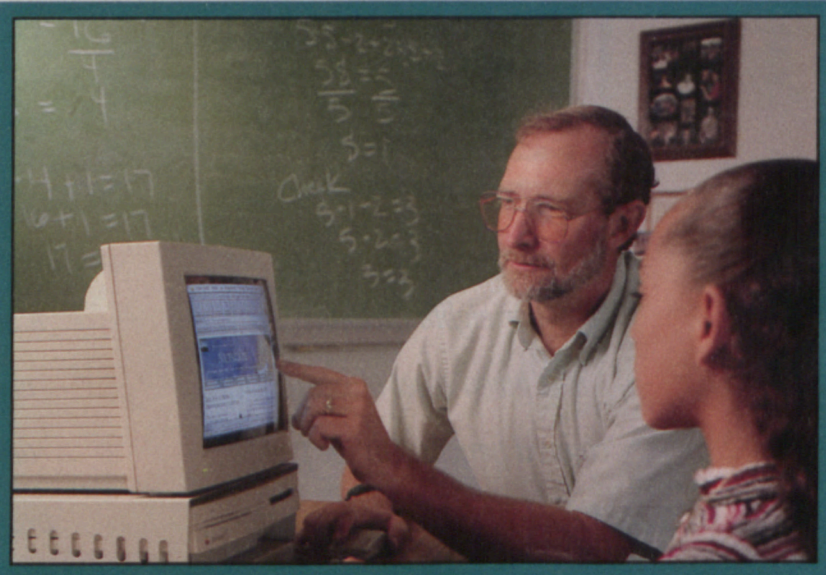
■ How do they work?

Charter schools run the gamut of approaches to curriculum, instruction, general organization, and governance.

Some schools retain their administrative ties to school districts but use the charter to design unique curricular and instructional approaches or to enhance parents' roles at the schools.

Others operate autonomously, receiving funds directly from the state. Some use museums, malls, or other non-traditional learning places as their learning base, with parent- or teacher-led governing boards.

In terms of academic approaches, a 1995 survey by the Education Commission of the States showed that the use of an integrated or interdisciplinary curriculum was the primary focus of many charter practitioners. Technology ranked second as a charter school focus, and back-to-basics and college prep programs were tied for third. Many charter schools target at-risk students.



Paul Body

Byron King teaches at O'Farrell Community School in San Diego—one of the nation's leading charter schools.

■ Any downside?

Yes. First, many state laws exempt charter schools from all state and local statutes, rules, and regulations, except for safety and health codes and nondiscrimination laws. Most charters do have to report to parents or local boards on student progress annually, but it's not always clear to whom and for what they are accountable.

Second, some charter proponents see chartering as a way to weaken the role of teacher unions, since most laws allow complete waivers of union contracts as well the education code. In states with collective bargaining, charter laws usually allow employees to organize only at the school site.

Third, those promoting privatization back charter schools as a way to end "big government running the schools." They believe that breaking up the public school "monopoly" could lead to a voucher-friendly education system.

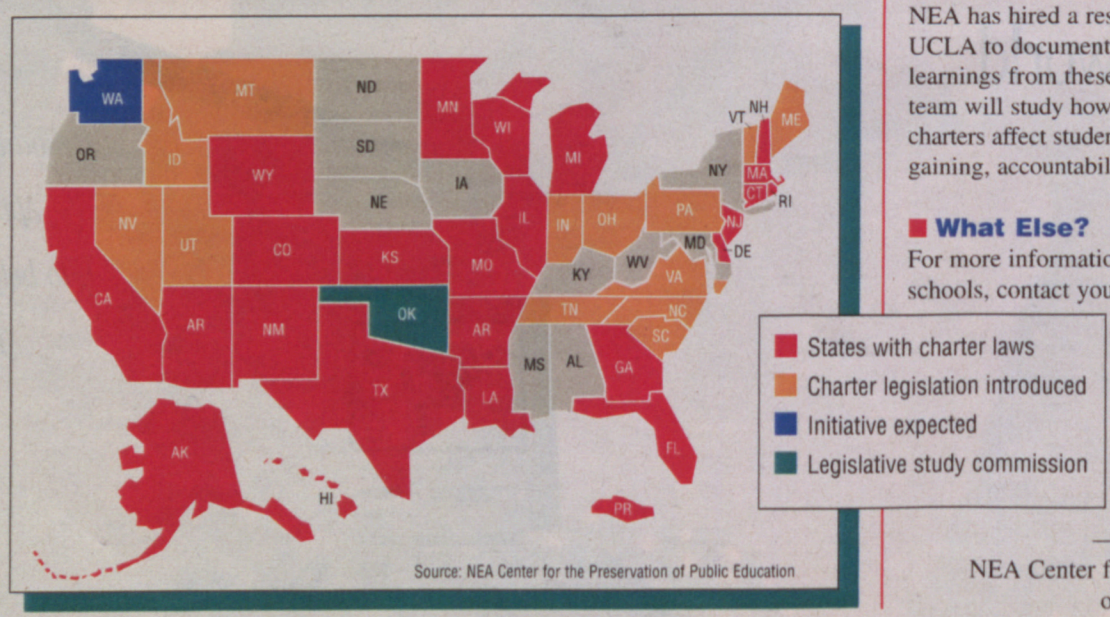
■ What's the positive?

Traditional friends of public education see charter laws as a way to preempt voucher legislation by offering parents more choices. They also view them as a way to free innovative teachers from the bureaucratic handcuffs that may constrain their creativity.

■ Who's throwing stones?

NEA members working in states with charter laws that promote privatization—Massachusetts is one—have been vocal critics. Members of the Massachusetts Teachers Association report that, under their state law, local school committees are completely stripped of any authority, charter schools often receive more funding than traditional schools, and for-profit companies granted charters often violate the spirit of what public education is all about. For example, teachers employed by one for-profit charter are prohibited by contract from sharing their learnings with other educators.

Some civil rights organizations have also been circumspect about charter schools. In Virginia, civil rights groups helped defeat charter legislation, charging that it could lead to the racial resegregation of public schools.



Source: NEA Center for the Preservation of Public Education

■ Where's NEA on all this?

NEA supports the charter notion as long as it's consistent with this country's commitment to free and universal public education, with equality of educational opportunity for all.

At the national and state level, NEA is working to help shape charter laws to prevent the use of public funds for essentially private ends. NEA and affiliates are also working to ensure that school staff, parents, and other community stakeholders are meaningfully involved in the creation, implementation, and governance of charter schools. When NEA members choose to work in charters, NEA is working to ensure that their basic rights and benefits are protected.

In addition, NEA has launched an Association-based Charter School Initiative. NEA members, in conjunction with local and state affiliates in six states—Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, and Hawaii—are creating charter schools. NEA has hired a research team from UCLA to document and assess key learnings from these six schools. The team will study how NEA-supported charters affect student learning, bargaining, accountability, and funding.

■ What Else?

For more information on charter schools, contact your NEA state affiliate or NEA's Center for the Preservation of Public Education, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

—Andrea DiLorenzo
NEA Center for the Preservation of Public Education

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To visit Amy Tan's web page: http://www.putnam.com/putnam/books/hundred_secret_senses/book.html

Students &

Good Stuff

Teacher-to-Teacher
Multiple Intelligences, one of the newest offerings in the NEA Teacher-to-Teacher series, features first-person stories by classroom teachers who recognize that book-smart isn't the only way to be intelligent. $12.95 plus s&h. For the NEA member price ($9.95), use stock #2910-0-10-FG. To order, call 800/229-4200 or write to the NEA Professional Library, P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06516.

Getting Back to School
The America Goes Back to School Activity Kit, produced by the Department of Education's Family Involvement in Education project, contains information about key education issues, practical tips for working with community groups, and examples of school/community partnerships that work. The kit is part of a national campaign to encourage parents, school personnel, employers, and community groups to play more active roles in improving education in their communities. For a free copy, call 800/872-5327.

Tips on Teaching
In *How Teachers Are Changing Schools*, teachers who are leaders in transforming our nation's schools share their tips for innovative school and classroom projects. Educators tell what they've learned about school restructuring, teacher-designed schools and curriculums, team teaching, community involvement, and more. $13.95. To order, contact IMPACT II, 285 West Broadway, New York, NY 10013, 212/966-5582.

Math, Science Winners
The Annenberg/CPB Math and Science Project each year funds media and communication projects that promote successful math and science programs. The Annenberg Project is now making summaries and learnings from past project winners available to all educators via the Internet. Coming soon: professional development libraries with examples of classroom lessons and activities and case studies of math and science reforms. For more information, contact Annenberg/CPB Math and Science Project, 901 E Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20004, 202/879-9600.

You know you have a problem when...

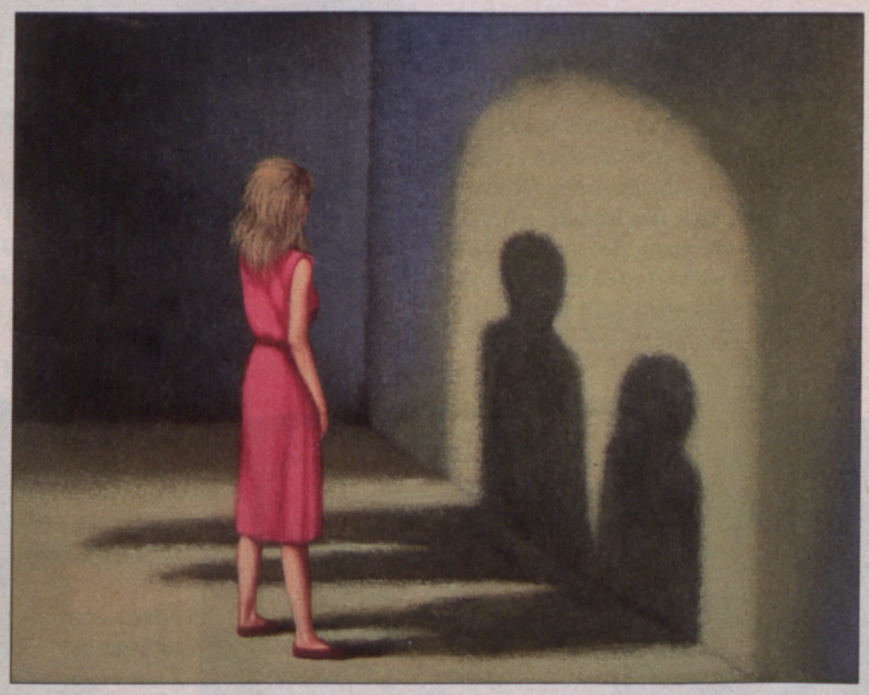
"You have a room full of computers that blow the circuit breaker every time you turn them on."

—Marjorie Hindman, high school business teacher, Osborne, Kansas

Dilemma

Educators Face Down Fear

How do you handle a student who scares you?



I've had kids who had pretty bad reps when they came into my classroom. I've had some big boys and some big girls. I simply talk to them when they first come in. I let them know what I tolerate and what I don't.

Kids have a clean slate when they come into my classroom. But the first time kids do something, I take them aside, and they find out I mean business. I call the parents. I let them know that this is unacceptable behavior. And, I'm consistent!

Barbara McCracken
Fifth grade teacher
Hampton, Virginia

I'm fairly good at calming students down and talking them through a problem. It's something you have to learn how to do. Some teachers antagonize the student—that makes the problem worse.

If the student has a history of this kind of behavior, you need to work with the administrator or ask parents to help solve the problem. If you feel you don't have the authority to deal with the student, you have to seek out a different level of authority to help handle the problem.

Dan Kolb
Middle school language arts teacher
Dodge City, Kansas

I've had a couple of students threaten me. I once suspended a young man from school, and he later came back onto the school property. I asked him to leave. He looked at me and said, "Mr. Meis, you don't scare me a bit."

I had no intention of forcing him to leave myself. I told him what the consequences would be if he didn't leave. He eventually left. I don't think it's good to try to belittle the student. I try to calm them down.

It's good to be firm and give them specific direction. Don't touch them, don't try to force them to do anything, don't let them see that you're angry. Once they see you're angry, you've lost the ball game.

John Meis
High school English teacher
Naperville, Illinois

I've found that it helps to talk to someone else who has a good relationship with the student. Many times, there's a support employee—a secretary, bus driver, custodian, or nurse—who has grown close to the student and can get through to them. I've asked our bus drivers to talk to kids who are giving me problems. They see them everyday and know what mood the student is in. The way I see it, the more help, the better.

Rich Malizia
Attendance officer
Union City, New Jersey

Got Answers?

The new *NEA Today* aims to help solve dilemmas by offering advice from educators who've been there. One upcoming question: How do you make sure the clock doesn't drive instruction?

If you've got an answer, send it to us by regular mail, Fax, or E-mail at this address: dilemma2@neatoday.nea.org. Be sure to include your name, educational position, and phone numbers.

Strategies

You know you've been successful when...

"Former students tell you they use the skills you taught them every day on the job."

—Annette Resseau, high school reading teacher, Orangeburg, South Carolina

Delight

What Do You Want To Be?

Kentucky teachers develop a new career education program.

Armed with student and parent surveys, a group of teachers at J. Graham Brown School in Jefferson County, Kentucky—a magnet for kids in grades K-12—have dreamed up a new career education program that's got it all.

Starting this school year, Brown's students will have access to business mentors, job shadowing, apprenticeships, internships, community service, and travel. The goal: to help students make the jump to post-secondary education and the world of work.

Called Pathways, the program offers students "opportunities to find their life path through self-discovery with concentrated programs in grades 7-12," explains Sue McCullough Vislisel, a 19-year Brown veteran.

"But it won't box kids into selecting just one career," says primary teacher Bonnie Cecil, who chaired the planning committee that came up with the idea. "Instead, it gives them lots of options to explore personal interests."

"Some Brown students are already job shadowing," says Deretha Marcum, Brown's counselor for kids in grades 7-12. "Last year, two students interested in nursing spent a day shadowing nurses at a downtown hospital and discovered that that's *not* what they want to do."

Other students have watched trials at the courthouse and seen lawyers and judges in action.

Pathways also integrates career exploration with classroom studies. Students interested in photography, graphic arts, printing, publishing, and journalism will help with the yearbook publication and new school newspaper as part of English class.

Paul Schuhmann

Louisville area teachers Bonnie Cecil (left) and Sue McCullough Vislisel help students explore job opportunities.

Observing lab research at the University of Louisville will provide insights for budding biologists and veterinarians who are studying anatomy and physiology. Working with city government, a facet of learning for Brown's social and environmental studies' students for years, will introduce youngsters to the world of politics.

Students have already tangled with government officials to try to effect change, says Cecil. Several years ago, students concerned about the environment got the Board of Aldermen to pass a law prohibiting the release of balloons in Louisville.

"Graduation by Exhibition" offers students another chance to learn about careers, says Vislisel, who started the program five years ago for seniors in her composition classes.

Now a requirement for all seniors, the program demands that students demonstrate what they've learned.

"As tough as it is to produce an exhibit," says Vislisel, "it's a test of honor, and the kids are proud of what they do." Students have already produced a concert, a senior prom, and written and produced a play.

To complete their exhibits, Cecil says, the students have to "touch base with professionals for input, abide by work ethics and use all kinds of job skills—organizing, communicating, writing, reflecting, even building."

The new focus on career learning has helped Brown gain community attention—and a waiting list of students who want in.

Idea Exchange

Recycled Learning

On "Learning Center Day," I put old teaching materials in cardboard magazine holders and shoe boxes labeled by genre—books and cassettes, leftover worksheets, videos, learning card games, board games, computer software, and flash cards.

When I place the materials around the room, students choose an activity to complete individually or in groups. While they're learning, I gain valuable planning time, create a student-centered classroom, and motivate my students to become independent learners.

Ray Mainenti
University High School
Morgantown, West Virginia

EnergyNet

A new program called EnergyNet helped our students gain the computer, problem-solving, and team-building skills they need in today's workplace—and saved us money.

At Evergreen Park, four independent study students spent hours counting light bulbs and measuring energy consumption in various parts of the school. Students put their findings on the EnergyNet homepage on the World Wide Web and used the Internet to check in with engineers at the Energy Resource Center at the University of Illinois at Chicago. The kids discovered that our school could save $3,300 a year on its gas bill by covering the swimming pool.

EnergyNet certainly meets its goal of getting students to solve problems on their own—and it taught me a few things, too.

Lynn Skizas
Evergreen Park High School
Evergreen Park, Illinois
lskizas@isbe.state.il.us
http://teaparty.terc.edu/energy/energy.html

Share Your Ideas

You can pass along your classroom tips to *NEA Today*'s 2.2 million readers in one of these four ways:

- By mail: *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St. N.W., Washington, DC 20036
- By phone: 202/822-7201
- By Fax: 202/822-7206
- By E-mail: Ideas@neatoday.nea.org

Professional

Good Stuff

Join the Network

Does your school work in partnership with a college to help train student teachers? Is your school planning such a liaison? Or is your college part of such a partnership with a public school?

If the answer to any of those questions is yes, your school or college may have an opportunity to join NEA's Professional Development School (PDS) Network.

The PDS Network is a cluster of innovative schools dedicated to the preparation of new teachers, the continuous growth of all educators, and research and development in the teaching profession.

The Network is an extension of NEA's Teacher Education Initiative, a collaborative effort with pre-K through grade 12 schools and colleges committed to transforming teaching to meet the present and future needs of students.

By joining the PDS Network, employees at your school can:

- Be part of a national network of innovative educators committed to reforming teaching and learning for professionals and practitioners.
- Play a role in significantly changing the preparation and continuing education of teachers.
- Have access to information, resources, and conferencing opportunities that will improve teaching and learning at your school.

If you're interested in joining the Network, contact Sylvia Seidel, NEA National Center for Innovation, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036, 202/822-7906.

Making It Real

For a look at a real-life professional development school, check out "Teaching the Teachers," a half-hour episode of *Teacher TV*, produced by NEA and the Learning Channel.

The show profiles a PDS school in Memphis and an Indiana local NEA affiliate that helped members gain control of their own learning.

To order, call 800/229-4200. $19.95 plus s&h. To get the member price, $15.95 plus s&h, use stock no. 7790-3-10-F. California and Washington, D.C. residents, please add sales tax.

You know you have a problem when...

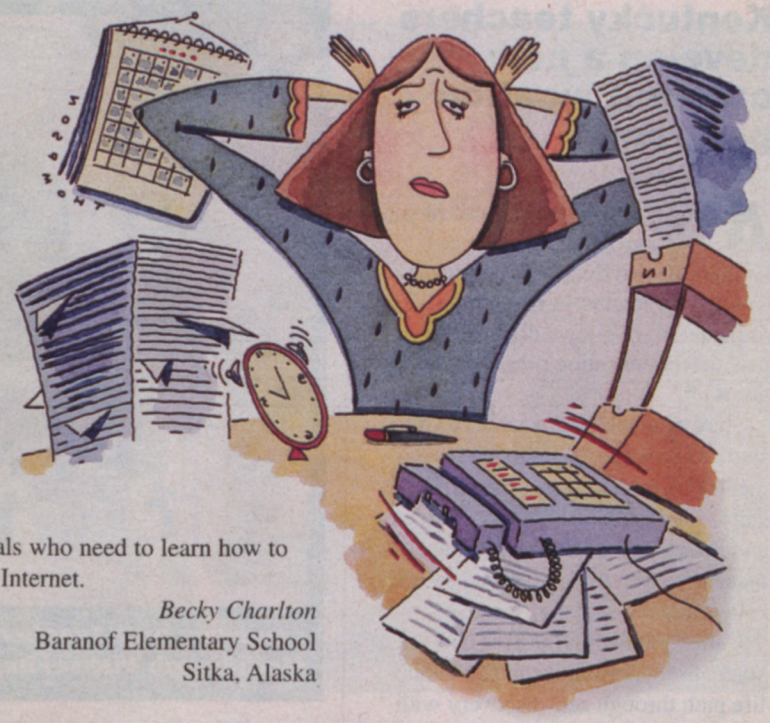
"You're on 14 or 15 committees, leader of five, and you still don't have input, because the boss still has the last word."

Millie Rodolosi, art and English teacher, Livonia, Michigan

Dilemma

In-Service Nightmare

How do you get the training you need—not in-service sessions that waste your time?



Get your Association involved. It was my state Association, the North Carolina Association of Educators, that led the charge for site-based management and funding for staff training so we could develop the skills to become good decision makers. Since 1994, the state has provided that training. Empowering teachers in this way has improved the lives of everyone here—especially the students.

Sue Parks
Philo Middle School
Winston-Salem, North Carolina

To do the best job they can, our school secretaries need first-hand knowledge of new technologies, but district money is tight.

In the past, whatever training secretaries got was in the form of a demonstration or a joint session with certified staff. Some found the latter a bit intimidating.

This year, rather than just hoping for the best, members of the Sitka Education Support Personnel Association decided to take a leadership role in defining and meeting our own professional needs. We applied for and got a grant from the NEA-created National Foundation for the Improvement of Education (NFIE) for staff training.

We plan to use the money to provide technology training for secretaries, training for maintenance workers who need to learn to inspect fire alarm panels, and training for paraprofessionals who need to learn how to use the Internet.

Becky Charlton
Baranof Elementary School
Sitka, Alaska

We use a Schools for the 21st Century state grant to give new meaning to professional development at our school.

We schedule two in-service sessions per month on Wednesday afternoons—students are released early on Wednesdays. We pretty much conduct the sessions ourselves. If one of us is using student portfolios, for example, that person gives the rest of us a lesson.

Or we might use the time to plan curriculum. For example, six of us teach the second and third graders in multi-age classes. Recently, we used our in-service time to work together to develop a unit on bridges. We all taught the same unit and supported one another throughout the program.

Phyllis Richardson
Newport Heights Elementary School
Bellevue, Washington

You've got to establish the basic premise that professional development is essential for all who affect student learning, and that professional development must focus on the teaching-learning process. Staff development shouldn't be an isolated session, but a daily process that allows educators to learn from one another.

Dennis Sparks, director
National Staff Development Council
Oxford, Ohio

Got Answers?

How do you collaborate with colleagues who don't want to work with you? If you've got an answer, send it to us by regular mail, Fax, or E-mail at this address: dilemma2@neatoday.nea.org. Include your name and phone number.

Growth

You know you've been successful when...

"You're now the person asked to present at instructional conferences and workshops you've attended in the past."

Mary Booker, elementary teacher, Pontiac, Illinois

Delight

Telling Tales in School

Maine teachers share stories to gain perspective on professional problems.

You've heard about telling tales out of school. How about telling tales in school? Not as gossip—as a professional development activity that helps educators solve classroom problems.

Storytelling is an old art, but it's been fine-tuned lately by educators in Maine and around the nation. They've found that providing time for teachers to "tell their stories" helps educators learn from one another.

The idea was suggested to Sue Walters, an eighth grade English teacher at Wells Junior High School in Maine, at a planning conference a few years ago.

"I thought, sit around and tell stories? What does that mean?" recalls Walters. But, after attending a storytelling session, Walters sang a different tune.

"It's an extremely powerful experience to be able to talk about some of the problems that you, as a teacher, are having, and then to hear what other folks' lives have been like," Walters says. "We all made connections. School settings and socioeconomic levels made no difference."

The experience, she says, "was so positive and so powerful" that the group decided to use the same technique with other educators in a series of regional, and then national, meetings.

Since then, the art of storytelling has evolved—and Walters has become a leader of the movement. When she leads sessions now, Walters tends to focus on just one topic or subject area—like working with troubled students or teaching reading.

David MacDonald

Storytelling has become a critical part of Maine teacher Sue Walter's efforts to restructure education.

Typically, the facilitator asks participants to tell a story, then draw from it lessons and "shining moments."

In the discussion that follows, the facilitator talks about events in the story, the setting, the plot, the characters, and the resolution.

Then participants break into small groups to tell their own stories. When all the stories in a group have been told, the group discusses them and identifies common themes.

It's this talking that leads to action. Stories contain insights about issues and problems—the discussion afterward leads to ways to improve teaching and learning.

"Storytelling is great for identifying issues and problems and finding solutions. And it works for everyone, from student interns to top administrators," says Walters, who often facilitates sessions at Association local and national conferences.

–Diane Dismuke

For more information, check out Journey to School Reform: Moving From Reflection to Action through Story Telling, *David K. Wallace, editor. To order, contact the NEA Professional Library, P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06516, 800/229-4200. $14.95 plus s&h. To get the member price, $12.95 plus s&h, use stock #1871-0-10-F. California and Washington, D.C. residents, add sales tax.*

Idea Exchange

Get that Grant

Members of the Lake Hamilton Classroom Teachers Association don't just talk about improving the profession, we do something about it. Recently, three of us found sources of grant money to fund projects that will make a difference in our schools.

Eighth grade English teacher Patti Shaw received a $500 grant to research professional portfolios as a mechanism for driving staff development.

Linda Black and I, interdisciplinary steering team coordinators, got a grant to develop Project CAR Show. As a lesson in math and finance, our ninth grade students will use pretend money they've earned doing community service projects to secure a loan, purchase a vehicle, buy insurance, and perform minor maintenance tasks.

Susan Reich
Piercy, Arkansas

Preparing the Soil

Judith Warren Little, an education professor at the University of California at Berkeley, says the following conditions are optimum for successful teacher development:

- Adequate time for teacher collaboration, developmental activity, and assessment.
- Assignments that not only make use of teacher knowledge, but also stretch capabilities.
- Small schools (or schools-within-schools) and organized teaching teams. These strategies help teachers overcome isolation and adopt a sense of shared accountability for student success.
- Teacher participation in evaluation of school programs or the ways schools use money targeted for professional development.
- Access to rich professional materials and technology.
- Subsidized teacher professionalism outside the classroom—for example, memberships in professional associations.

For information about Little's study on this subject, contact her at jwlittle@garnet.berkeley.edu or at the University of California at Berkeley, School of Education, Berkeley, CA 94720-1670.

Health

Have a Safe Ride

Angela Mickalide, Ph.D. is the program director of the National SAFE KIDS Campaign, a nationwide program to prevent accidental injuries to children ages 14 and under. She spoke recently with Janet Samorodin, a staff member from the NEA Health Information Network.

How safe are school buses?
Very. Since 1984, about 428,000 children have died in fatal *traffic* crashes, with less than one-half of 1 percent classified as school bus-related. Since 1984, 1,517 adults and children have died in school bus-related crashes. Most were occupants in other vehicles, one third were bicyclists or pedestrians—only 11 percent were school bus occupants.

Is there a particular age group that's most at risk?
From 1984 to 1994, half of all pedestrian school bus-related deaths were among children five to seven years old. Kids that age are less able to perceive danger, hear the safety message, or retain the message once they've heard it.

How many injuries occur each year?
Every year approximately 7,000 children 14 and under are injured in school bus-related incidents. Most injuries occur when children are boarding or exiting the bus and cross the street in the 10-foot blind spot in front of the bus. Many school buses now are being manufactured with a mechanical arm that reaches out in front of the bus so that children cannot walk in that obstructed zone.

Would seat belts prevent school bus fatalities?
We know that in motor vehicles, cars, and cabs, seat belts save children's lives and prevent countless injuries. However, many school buses involved in a crash roll over and catch on fire. Having safety belts in the bus could prevent a child from being able to escape if caught in a fire or rollover.

School buses are now designed to create an egg carton effect when there's a crash. The seats are close together with the backs of the seats padded to allow for emergency exit and less distance for the child to travel if the bus is hit.

What do kids need to know about loading and unloading the bus?
To boost safety, children should arrive at least five minutes before the bus comes. This gives kids enough time to kiss their parents good-bye, socialize, and prepare to board the bus. They should stay out of the street, not fool around, and wait for their parents on the same side of the street as the loading and unloading zones.

Children should cross 10 feet in front of the bus—out of the blind spot. While boarding the bus, they should walk in a single file and use the handrails. Parents should remove loose drawstrings or ties on kids' sweatshirts. Since 1991, seven children have been dragged and killed when their clothing caught on the handrail or in the door.

Finally, they should be taught to be more aware in the afternoon—that's when most fatalities occur.

How about when children are on the bus?
Children should remain seated, not throw objects, and not distract the driver. These things seem to be common sense, but they need to be taught with each new school year.

A lot of our members train kids in bus safety. Can you give any tips?
I would urge people not to use animated cars and buses in teaching materials. Young children—four, five, and six years of age—believe that inanimate objects are alive and that if they can see the car or bus, the car or bus can see them.

From the Network

The NEA Health Information Network provides members with resources that promote the health and well-being of education employees and their students. Resources currently available include:

- **Responding to HIV and AIDS,** a guide for NEA members.
- **The Most Frequently Asked Questions About Fetal Alcohol Syndrome,** a listing of common questions about FAS—and some answers from noted experts in the field.
- **Health and Wellness Promotion,** a resource directory for education employees.
- **IAQ and You,** a comprehensive packet of information on indoor air quality, including fact sheets, order forms for EPA materials, and a resource list.
- **Project Reach,** a how-to manual for promoting the early detection of breast and cervical cancer in your school community.

To order any of these publications, write to the NEA Health Information Network, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

Send E-mail requests to (NEAHIN1@aol.com). Single copies are free to NEA members.

Call 800/718-8387, the NEA Health Information Network's new hotline for information packets on HIV/AIDS, indoor air quality, water quality, and breast and cervical cancer. In the Washington, D.C. area, call 202/822-7572.

Resources

- The National SAFE KIDS Campaign has information on safety. Send a self-addressed stamped envelope to the National SAFE KIDS Campaign, 1301 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20004.
- To get school bus and other motor vehicle safety information or report a safety-related problem, call the Department of Transportation's Auto Safety Hotline, 800/424-9393.
- The School Bus Fleet homepage on the World Wide Web—http://www.schoolbusfleet.com—offers comprehensive information on school bus safety and current happenings in the school-bus industry.

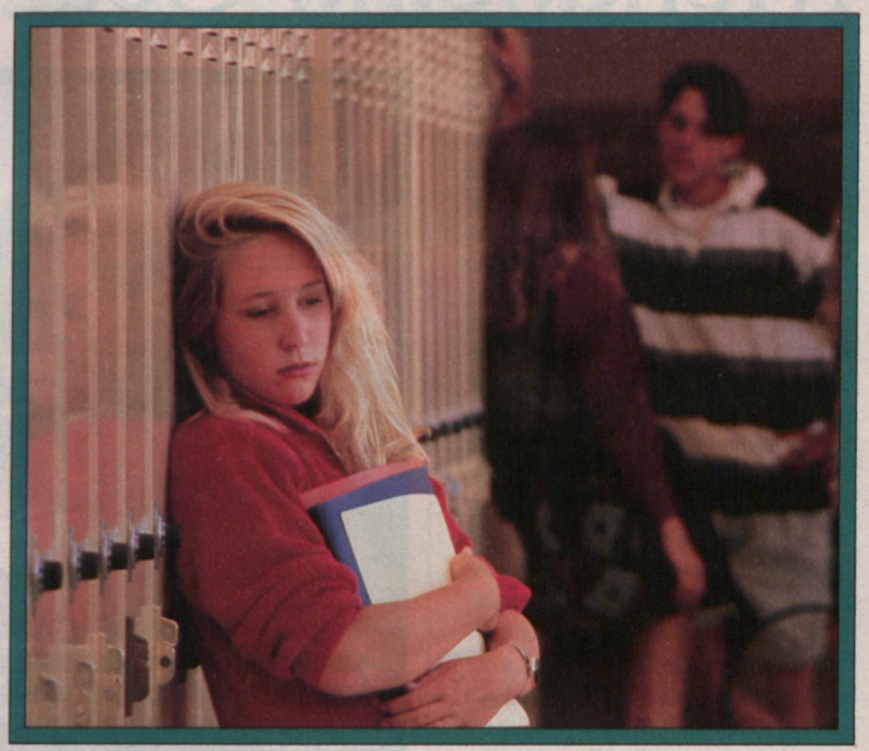
Rights Watch

Flirting or Hurting?

Student-on-student sexual harassment lawsuits are no longer rare cases.

"A female student should not be required to run a gauntlet of sexual abuse in return for the privilege of being allowed to obtain an education."

Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education (1996)



LaShonda D., as she's called in the court papers, just wanted the harassment to stop.

Over a five-month period, the fifth grader from rural Monroe County, Georgia had been subjected to a constant barrage of unwelcomed and offensive sexual abuse at the hands of a classmate.

The harassing student—identified only as G.F.—made repeated attempts to touch her breasts and genital areas. He told her, "I want to get in bed with you" and "I want to feel your boobs." And, while standing in a hallway, G.F. rubbed his body against hers in a sexually-suggestive way.

LaShonda complained to her classroom teacher after each incident, but the teacher did nothing more than notify the principal of the complaints.

When LaShonda's mother called the principal to complain about the school's failure to do anything to stop the harassment, he asked why LaShonda "was the only one complaining."

Fed up, LaShonda and her mother finally took out a criminal warrant against G.F. for sexual battery. He was convicted. Then the familty sued the Monroe County Board of Education in federal court, seeking money damages for the district's failure to take effective action to protect her from G.F.'s harassment.

The suit alleged that the Board's inaction violated Title IX, the federal law prohibiting public educational institutions from discriminating on the basis of sex.

In a landmark decision handed down last February, *Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education*, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit agreed, holding that public school districts can be held liable under Title IX for failing to stop student-on-student sexual harassment.

Meanwhile, in Texas, eighth graders "Janet and Jane Doe" suffered the same physical and verbal abuse at the hands of a fellow student, but their lawsuit had a decidedly different outcome.

While riding the school bus over a four-month period, G.S. repeatedly slapped their buttocks when they walked down the aisle. He asked them lewd questions, called Janet a "whore," and grabbed Jane's breasts and genital area.

The Does complained to the bus driver no fewer than eight times, and G.S. finally was suspended from riding the bus for three days. But the suspension didn't deter him.

Joined by their mother, the Does subsequently sued the school district alleging a Title IX violation.

Last April, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit in the case *Rowinsky v. Bryan Independent School District* ruled that Title IX does not require school officials to take any action to stop student-on-student sexual harassment and dismissed the Does' lawsuit.

The court reasoned that Title IX prohibits sexual harassment only by the *recipients* of federal funds—the school district and its employees. Since students who harass others are not agents of the school, school districts cannot be held liable for peer harassment, the court concluded.

In reaching the opposite conclusion in the *Davis* case, the Eleventh Circuit first noted that employers covered by Title VII have a legal obligation to stop sexual harassment of employees perpetrated by co-workers or other third parties. And the same principles should apply to Title IX claims.

After all, the court said, "a student should have the same protection in school that an employee has in the workplace."

Emphasizing that the U.S. Department of Education has taken the position that peer harassment is a violation of Title IX, the court concluded that school districts can be held liable for student-on-student sexual harassment when they fail "to respond adequately to actual or constructive notice of the harassment."

Federal district courts in California, Missouri, New York, and Connecticut also have ruled that Title IX covers peer harassment.

On July 1, 1996, the plaintiffs in the *Rowinsky* case filed a petition with the U.S. Supreme Court asking that the Fifth Circuit's decision be reversed. NEA has joined in a friend-of-the-court brief supporting that petition.

The High Court likely will not announce whether it will hear the case until it reconvenes in October.

Whether or not that case is reversed, school employees would be well advised to take appropriate action to stop peer sexual harassment whenever it rears its ugly head.

—Michael D. Simpson
NEA Office of General Counsel

Resources

■ **NEA Human and Civil Rights** offers in-depth training sessions to help members effectively confront peer-to-peer sexual harassment. For more information on NEA training opportunities or on any aspect of the sexual harassment problem, contact NEA Human and Civil Rights, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

■ **Bullyproof: A Teacher's Guide on Teasing and Bullying for Use with Fourth and Fifth Grade Students.** *Nan Stein and Lisa Sjostrom. NEA Professional Library, 60 pp., $19.95 plus s&h.*
This guide deals with teasing and bullying—the antecedents of sexual harassment. The goal is to help young children understand the difference between appropriate and inappropriate, playful and hurtful behavior. To order, call the NEA Professional Library toll-free hotline at 800/229-4200. For members' price ($15.95), give stock #1873-7-10-FF.

■ **Flirting or Hurting? A Teacher's Guide on Student-on-Student Sexual Harassment in Schools (Grades 6-12).** *Nan Stein and Lisa Sjostrom. NEA Professional Library, 116 pp., $19.95 plus s&h.*
The lessons here are designed to teach the meaning of sexual harassment and to encourage students to stand up to harassment in any guise—bullying, racial and ethnic intolerance, gay bashing, hazing, and domestic violence. To order, call 800/229-4200. For members' price ($15.95), give stock #1864-8-00-FF.

■ **Bullying at School: What we know and what we can do.** Dan Olweus, *Blackwell Publishers, Inc., 135 pp., $15.95.*
Dan Olweus is a psychology professor at the University of Bergen, Norway, and an expert on the problems of bullying and victimization. This book offers practical advice on how to implement a "whole school approach to bullying" and includes a guide to help educators recognize if a child bullies others or is being victimized. For more information, call 800/216-2522.

Bits & Bytes

New & Noteworthy

Technology Funds
"Where You Can Find Funds for Technology," a free brochure, lists funding sources, characteristics of successful grant writers, information on searching for grants on the Internet, how to set up a proposal writing team, and much more.

For more information, write to the Center for Professional Development and Resources, One Lake St., Upper Saddle River, NJ 07458. Attn: Hope Heredia.

Basic Connection
If your school is getting connected to the Internet and you want to know exactly what's involved, check out "Get Ready, Get Set, Go ON-LINE!"

This 71-minute documentary takes you through all the steps of linking a school to the Internet by showing you three schools that have chosen different solutions for getting online. $49.95. To order, call Master Communications Group, Inc. at 800/862-6164.

Teacher's Toolbox
"Teacher's Toolbox for Windows" helps organize class schedules, student attendance and grades, set up seating charts, and create lesson plans. This program also features a nice function for weighting grades. $29.95 from Ablesoft. For details, call 800/334-2722.

Science Lessons
"Science Helper K-8," a CD available for Macintosh and PC, contains more than 900 teacher-tested lesson plans from seven curriculums, plus an abstract for each lesson that allows you to decide whether the lesson fits in with your needs. $195. Call 800/793-TEAM. Available in lab packs and with district licenses.

Club Ed
Membership in the Educator's Internet CD Club entitles you to four CD-ROMs per school year.

Each CD is full of Web sites organized by subject and includes lesson plans, activity sheets, teaching tips, and teacher resources. It costs $79 to join.

For details, call 800/638-1639; E-mail (connect@classroom.net), or visit (http://www.classroom.net).

Friendly Users

Mendocino Gets Wired

Who:
Mark Morton, fourth and fifth grade computer lab teacher, district technology coordinator, Mendocino Grammar School, Mendocino, California.

E-mail address:
mark@mcn.org

What:
Thanks to educators in a rural school district, an entire community now has access to the Internet.

Inspiration:
"Four years ago, those of us on the district's technology team realized the Internet's potential to improve education. But we had one big problem: access."

"Mendocino is a scenic, coastal, rural community with many 'refugees' from the congested San Francisco Bay area 150 miles away. But because of our remote location, there aren't the numerous local Internet access providers you'd find in more populated communities.

"To rectify that situation, we took two basic steps. First, we worked with the AutoDesk Foundation to find sponsors—in our case, NASA and Pacific Bell—to support our interest in the Internet. Our technology team used NASA's help to become the Internet Service Provider for our community—both as a service to the community and as a way to maintain funding for our schools' Internet access once NASA's three-year commitment to us ended.

"NASA and Pacific Bell provided our school district with startup equipment and technical support, and we worked many long hours to establish our Internet node.

"Almost all of our 70 teachers own at least one computer and a modem, so it's not as though any sort of wizardry is in the hands of the technically elite. Over the past four years, we've installed Internet connectivity in every classroom in the district and provided free dial-up access to all district teachers from their homes.

"In addition, we have 1,000 community subscribers to our service. Now they can get a glimpse of what their schools are doing at our Web site (http://www.mcn.org/ed). And through the World Wide Web presence that we've established, our community is known throughout the world."

Peter DaSilva

"We are no longer one isolated classroom," says Deena Zarlin, whose fifth graders collaborated with a San Francisco school on a story-writing project through the Internet.

Click:
"Though we've been integrating technology into our curriculum since 1978, it was my belief from the start that paying attention to our school culture was more important than any technology plan. Our teachers use the Internet to enhance their work, not redirect it."

More About:
Mendocino: How did so many teachers get a computer and modem at home? What are some of the great projects they've gotten involved in? For these details and more from Mark Morton and Deena Zarlin, E-mail Bits@neatoday.nea.org.

Net Day '96: Throughout October, organizers will help schools nationwide get online, often by involving the community. To participate or get more information, call 800/55NET96 or go to (http://www.netday96.com).

Bytes for Beginners

To connect one school—or an entire district—takes support, planning, money, and know-how. If you're lucky enough to have all this, use them to address these potential problem areas:

Internet connection:
"Dedicated high-speed" Internet connections are leased telephone (56KB, T-1, or T-3) or cable wires designed to transport large amounts of data at high speeds to and from a computer network. "Dial-up" connections typically support only one computer's connection to the Internet via a modem and telephone line—the same wire used for a telephone.

Equipment:
Most computers can support dial-up Internet connections. But old computers can pose a challenge if your school networks computers to take advantage of a dedicated high-speed Internet connection.

Wiring and hardware:
Will the technology bought today support the teaching and learning goals of tomorrow? And is it relatively safe to assume that a signed contract will support more changes in technology two to five years down the road?

Click Here

Join the 21st Century

The Twenty-First Century Teacher Initiative, that is.

The Initiative's mission: to enlist a corps of educators who will work with their colleagues, communities, and students to ensure that all can use educational technology to improve teaching and learning.

President Clinton announced the program last spring as an education community response to his Technology Literacy Challenge. Educators around the country are already signing up.

Sounds great—I think. What exactly does it mean to be a "Twenty-First Century Teacher"?

It means pledging to do four worthwhile things: Build expertise in using new technologies for teaching and learning. Share expertise and experience with school colleagues. Use your expertise with students as part of the ongoing daily learning process. And work to make classroom technology available to all students and teachers.

How do I sign up?

You can enroll electronically on the Initiative's World Wide Web site (http://www.21ct.org) or by sending an E-mail to 21st@21ct.org.

How far along is this project?

You can get in on the ground floor. At NEA's Representative Assembly in July, educators enrolled by "taking the pledge."

And as school resumes this September, there will be a highly publicized national kick-off, as well as local events around the country.

Teachers who enroll will commit to work with five of their colleagues during October and at least five others during the rest of the year, exploring the potential of educational technology.

Will I get even a pat on the back for participating?

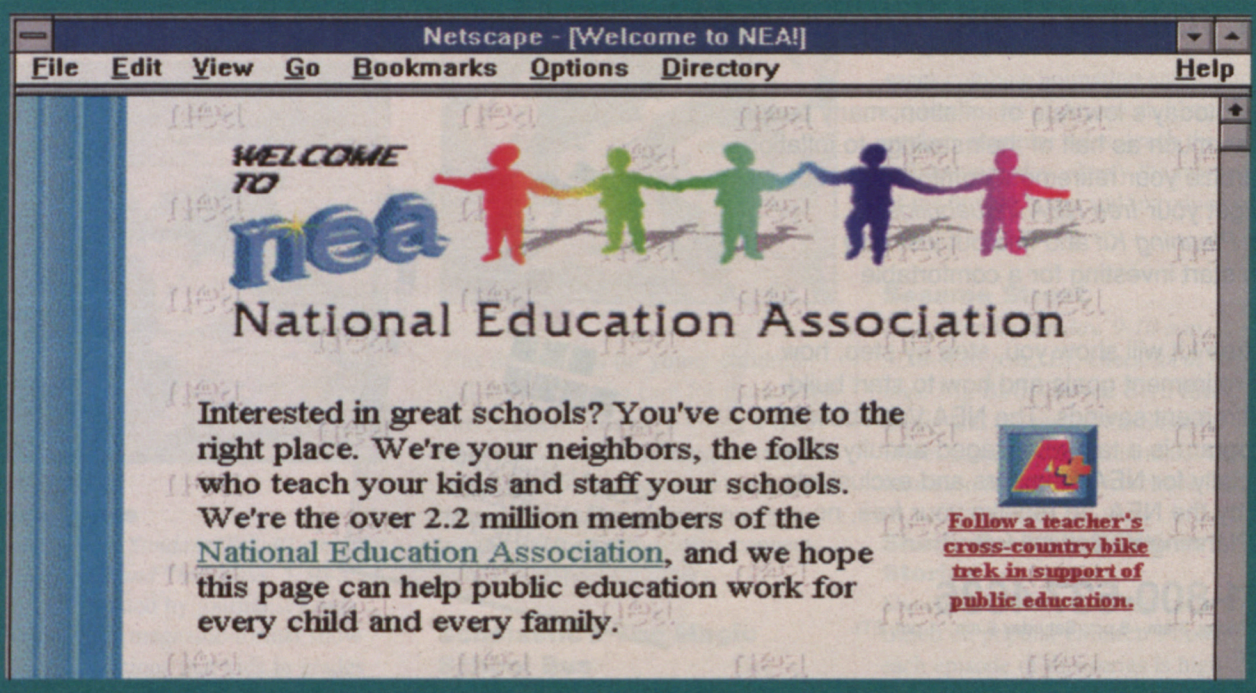
Better. You'll get official acknowledgment from the White House. And corporate sponsors are considering other opportunities and resources for those who enroll. The Twenty-First Century Teacher Web site will include a rich list of potential resources to help you in your work. And it'll help identify other educators involved in promoting and utilizing educational technology.

Looks like a big deal. Who's coordinating this thing?

Many groups, both national and local, may endorse this effort. But the initial planners were the NEA, the AFT, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, the National PTA, the American Association of Community Colleges, the National School Boards Association, the United States Tech Corps, the Council of Chief State School Officers, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, and the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

But an impressive-looking list like this means nothing without the participation of educators like you. For more information, visit the Initiative's Web site at http://www.21ct.org.

Screen Shot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WELCOME TO nea
National Education Association
Interested in great schools? You've come to the right place. We're your neighbors, the folks who teach your kids and staff your schools. We're the over 2.2 million members of the National Education Association, and we hope this page can help public education work for every child and every family.
Follow a teacher's cross-country bike trek in support of public education.

NEA's Web site (http://www.nea.org) makes it easy for visitors to see for themselves what's happening in America's public schools. The site is updated at least weekly, with everything from educational news flashes to hotlinks for the most promising new Web resources. In July, the site added a new twist: audio files that let cybersurfers hear the major speeches at the 1996 NEA Representative Assembly.

Web Winners

Basic Route

Web66 at (http://web66.coled.umn.edu), a World Wide Web project designed to help introduce Internet technology to K-12 schools, is linked to more than 3,500 school sites from around the world—searchable by special categories. Register here to add your school's Web site. Check out information on how to set up a Web server using a Mac or Windows 95, a mailing list for educators to join, and a link to the Mustang Project, designed to help educators "cruise the Web" more efficiently. You can reach this site from the NEA Web site.

Web Weavers

Five fifth graders and a fourth grader—the Web Weavers from Christianburg (VA) Elementary School—have put together a home page (http://www.bev.net/education/schools/ces) with one computer and a dedicated phone line. Web Weaver Cheryl Heatwole was the winner of the National Technology Leadership Competition for elementary students. The Web Weavers work under the guidance of teachers Catherine Ney and Heidi Bernard.

Tech for the Disabled

The National Center to Improve Practice (http://www.edc.org/FSC/NCIP/) provides information on using technology with students who have "sensory, cognitive, physical, and social/emotional disabilities." Its new Web site includes facilitated discussion forums on special education and technology.

Teachers' Network

Impact II, a teachers' network, has established the Teachnet Web site (http://www.teachnet.org), with information on grant opportunities as well as policy discussions. *Teacher's Guide to Cyberspace*, a teacher-written book for those with little online experience, includes a step-by-step guide for building a Web site. To order, visit their Web site or call 800/200-8284.

Age Appropriate

Yahooligans, a new browser Yahoo has set up for Web surfers ages 8 to 14, brings up only sites that are suitable for this age group. The address is (http://www.yahooligans.com/).

INFLATION WILL WIPE OUT SOME OF YOUR SAVINGS

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TVB096

Heads Up!

TV Tips

Avonlea

The Disney Channel, Sundays, 6-7 p.m., and Mondays, 8-9 p.m., ET. Based on the stories by Lucy Maud Montgomery, this dramatic series is set on picturesque Prince Edward Island in the turn-of-the-century village of Avonlea and focuses on the adventures of the people who lived there.

Beakman's World

CBS, Saturday, Noon-12:30 p.m., ET. Paul Zaloom stars as Beakman, a humorous, inquisitive scientist who answers questions from viewers of all ages as he takes them on an exciting journey of science discovery. Topics are addressed with humor and state-of-the-art visuals designed to make learning fun.

National Geographic Explorer

TBS, Sundays, 9-11 p.m., ET. Using expert photography and documentation, this documentary takes viewers around the globe each week to examine several areas of scientific interest, such as animals, the environment, space, and more.

Nick News

Nickelodeon, Sundays, 8-8:30 p.m., Wednesdays and Thursdays, 5:30-5:55 a.m., ET. Hosted by journalist Linda Ellerbee, this magazine-format show asks the questions that kids in grades four to six ask. Topics include current events, the environment, gender stereotypes, AIDS, and toy safety.

The Puzzle Place

PBS, Monday-Friday, 8-8:30 a.m., 2:30-3 p.m., ET, check local listings.

Mark your calendars for October 13 at 12:30 p.m., ET. That's when* School Stories *premieres on the Learning Channel.* School Stories*, a joint project of NEA and the Learning Channel, is designed to help the public understand what's really happening in America's classrooms. This is compelling televison about real life, and there's an extra benefit, for NEA members. Each episode of* School Stories *will be available for order with 15- to 20-minute taped interviews with people seen in the show to explore in-depth how each school is doing what it's doing. The first show features National Teacher of the Year Mary Beth Blegen from Minnesota and Texas teacher John Fuerst, who use different, but successful, teaching strategies to connect with their students—from the merely bored to the truly troubled. Pictured above is a* School Stories *crew on site during taping of a show about making schools safe.

This daily series for young children and the adults who care for them helps kids celebrate diversity. Using a lively combination of song, story, comedy, and puppets, the program takes a gentle and entertaining approach to sowing the seeds of self-esteem, cooperation, and respect for others.

Scholastic's The Magic School Bus

PBS, Sundays, 10-10:30 a.m., ET, check local listings. Lily Tomlin provides the voice for Ms. Frizzle, the science teacher who turns the natural world into a laboratory, taking her enthusiastic, multicultural class on a new field trip every episode.

Schoolhouse Rock

ABC, Saturdays, 10:25 and 11:55 a.m., ET. These three-minute messages combine animation and music to explore facets of American history, explain grammar rules, teach the multiplication tables, clarify the mysteries of the human body, and introduce concepts of computers.

Sesame Street

PBS, Monday-Friday, 9-10 a.m. & 3:30-4:30 p.m., ET, check local listings. Big Bird, Grover, Bert, Ernie, Elmo, and the rest of the Sesame Street gang help children make the transition from home to school.

Shelly Duvall's Bedtime Stories

Showtime, Sundays, 7-7:30 a.m., ET. Based on popular children's books, each episode of this series is highlighted by celebrity narration and animation.

KIDSNET, the computerized clearinghouse for children's electronic media, prepared this list of all time great series.

Free or Inexpensive

Classroom Commercialism

In response to the attacks that have been coming at public education from all sides, *Rethinking Schools*, a non-profit quarterly newspaper, is offering "Selling Out Our Schools," a collection of essays by teachers, educators, and lawmakers on such issues as vouchers, charter schools, privatization, and the conservative education agenda. $5 plus $3.50 s&h. 1001 E. Keefe Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53212, 414/964-9646.

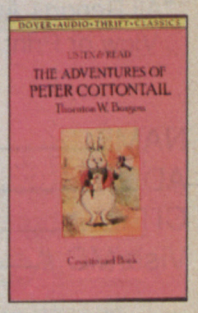
Heart Smart

Big News Straight from the Heart. This oversized and colorful book from the American Heart Association's New Heart-Power Program combines health tips and storytelling. Follow Kiwi and Sneakers as they get the latest scoop on healthy living. A Spanish version is also available. $20. American Heart Association, 800/AHA-USA1.

Earth Watch

Two books that combine learning about the environment and fun. ***The Remarkable Rainforest*** and ***The Incredible Coral Reef*** use experiments, puzzles, riddles, mazes, and crafts to inform children about the plight of the world's rain forests and coral reefs. $10.95 each plus $2.95 s&h, $.50 s&h charge for each additional book. Trickle Creek Books, 500 Andersontown Rd, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055, 800/353-2791.

Books on Tape



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Heads Up

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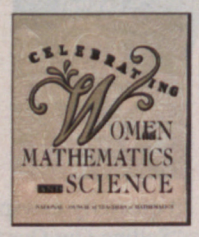
Women and Math

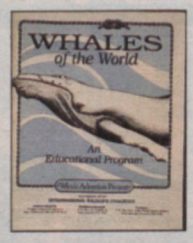


Celebrating Women in Mathematics and Science. Written by teachers of mathematics and science, this collection of short stories examines the considerable contributions women have made in these fields. Children learn how determination, creativity, and intellectual passion helped these women excel. $22.50 plus $3 s&h. NCTM, 1906 Association Dr., Reston, VA 22091, 800/235-7566.

Audio Tapes

Using eight professional actors and original music and lyrics, ***The Monster in the Woods*** blends storytelling with issues of tolerance, understanding and friendship. Written by NEA member James Comey. $10 plus $1.45 s&h. Stages of Imagination, P.O. Box 257, Media, PA 19063, 610/543-3131.

Whale Adoption



Have you ever wanted a whale for a child? The International Wildlife Coalition offers a "Whale Adoption Kit," which includes a color brochure on whales and a videotape on whale preservation, plus a photo, a personalized certificate, biography, and migration map of your class's adopted whale. $29.95. Teachers receive a free "Whales of the World Teacher's Kit!" Whale Adoption Project, Dept. 96NETK, 70 E. Falmouth Hwy, E. Falmouth, MA 02536, 800/548-8704.

Multiple Intelligences

Shows how your colleagues are tapping into their student's unique capabilities by adapting their teaching strategies to take advantage of the seven intelligences. If you're looking for practical examples of how Gardner's theory can improve teaching and learning, this is the book for you. 96 pp. (#2910-0-10-FG) NEA Member Price: $9.95 plus p&h. NEA Professional Library, P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06516. 800/229-4200, FAX 203-933-5276.

The Facts About Schools

Tired of hearing how "horrible" the public schools are? Get this booklet and get the facts. ***The Good—and Not-So Good—News About American Schools*** informs you about what our schools have done right—and what they need to do better. 9 copies or less—$1 each. 10 or more copies—$.50 each. Free s&h for prepaid orders. Call 800/766-1156. Or send check to Order Dept., Phi Delta Kappa International, PO Box 789, Bloomington, IN 47402.

Do We Still Need Public Schools?

Phi Delta Kappa offers a booklet discussing the basic reasons for a public school system in our society. 9 copies or less—$1 each; 10 or more copies—$.50 each. Free s&h for prepaid orders. Call 800/766-1156, Visa or Mastercard accepted. Or send check to Order Dept., Phi Delta Kappa International, PO Box 789, Bloomington, IN 47402.

Awards

Who says excellence doesn't exist in America's public schools? Not the National Science Foundation. Of the 216 recipients of the Foundation's Presidential Awards for Excellence in Science and Mathematics Teaching, the majority come from public schools. In addition, more than half of the educators are women and classroom veterans, with 15 to 30 years of teaching experience. Here's a list of NEA members who won.

MATHEMATICS

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Heads Up

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Heads Up

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Grants

So, you have a great idea that you think will help you teach better or help your students learn more, but need some extra dollars to get it into practice? How about a grant? Here are a few sources.

Math, Science, or Engineering

■ Need help with teaching science, math, or engineering to disabled students? The National Science Foundation supports projects that strive to break down the barriers that these students often face. For information, contact Programs for Persons with Disabilities, Education and Human Resources directorate, National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Blvd, Suite 885, Arlington, VA 22230, 703/306-1636.

■ If you've got a broad, innovative, and forward-thinking project, possibly with national potential, in science education, environmental education, or job training, this is the grant for you. Information: Kathryn Carey, Manager, American Honda Foundation, PO Box 2205, Torrance, CA 90509-2205, 310/781-4090.

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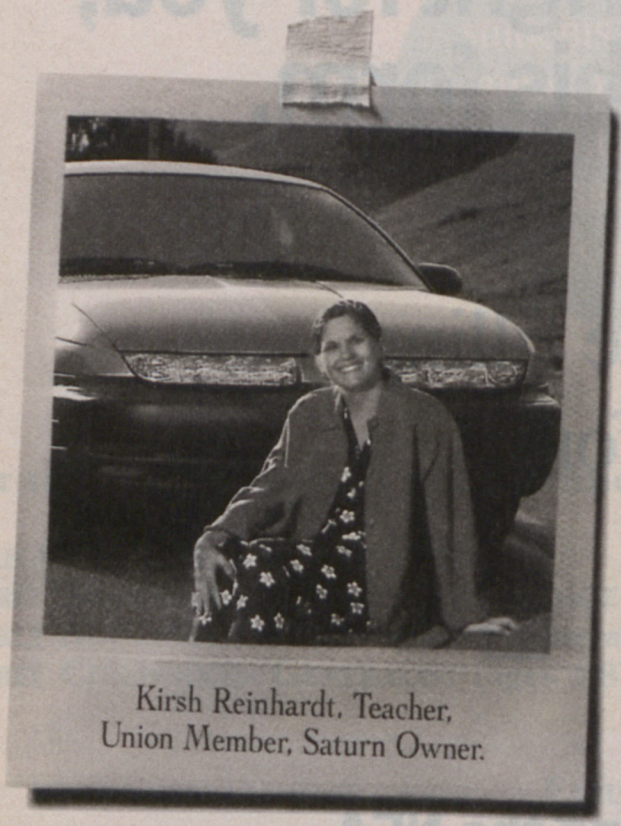
Heads Up

Are you an elementary or secondary school science teacher? Do you wish your students were as excited about science as you are? And, most importantly, do you teach in Lake County, Ohio? If you are and you do, the Partners in Science Excellence have funds available to let you create classroom projects that stress both the fun and excitement of hands-on science. Information: RSVP—Kennedy School, 34050 Glen Drive, Eastlake OH 44095.

■ The National Science Teachers Association and Toyota Motor Sales USA are offering grants to those interested in showing their students how science directly impacts them. Grants will be awarded in two categories—environmental education and physical science application. Information: NSTA/Tapestry, 1840 Arlington Blvd., Arlington, VA 22201-3000, 703/312-9258.

"It feels good to have a homemade car."



Kirsh Reinhardt. Teacher, Union Member, Saturn Owner.

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School Technology

■ If you're trying to get technology or technology training in your school, then you're probably eligible for a Challenge Grant for Technology in Education. Information: Challenge Grants for Technology in Education, Assistant Secretary for Education Research, Statistics, and Improvement, Dept. of Education, 555 New Jersey Ave., N.W., Room 506-C, Washington, DC 20208, 202/219-2138.

■ "Rural" doesn't mean "out-of-touch" anymore. Support is here for any projects that encourage, improve, or make affordable the use of advanced telecommunications or computer networks to provide educational and medical benefits to people in rural communities. Information: Walter Perry, Assistant Director, Economic Development and Technical Services, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Rural Utilities Service, 14th Ave. S.W., Washington, DC 20250-1500, 202/690-1419.

Career Education

■ If you can say this award 10 times fast, then you probably deserve it. The "American Association for Career Education Citations for Career Education Initiatives—Programs, Practices, and Publications That Work" is accepting nominations from innovative career educators. Contact: Pat Nellor Wickwire, 2900 Amby Place, Hermosa Beach, CA 90254-2216, 310/376-7378.

Try This, Too

■ For more grant ideas, put the Internet's World Wide Web to work for you. Try the following sites for great links to find out about government and non-profit sources of funding: the Grant Index (www.cs virginia.edu/~seas/resdev/sponsors.html) and the Grant Getting People (www.uic.edu/depts/ovcr/ors1.html). For pointers on how to write a grant proposal, check out the Grant Writer (www.fallingrock.com).

In the Light Lane

Hallway Humor

I was introducing a new book to a group of rowdy little boys in my first grade class. The book was "Good Morning, Sunshine," and I was trying my best to get the boys to say, "Good morning."

After a variety of incorrect reponses, I finally said, "What do I say to *you* in the *morning* when I see you in the hallway?"

One little boy, with a puzzled look on his face, raised his hand and said, "Slow down?"

Sara Seybert Turner
Clinton, Tennessee

While teaching sixth grade history, I asked my students to write a report on a famous Greek. One student was very clear and to the point. He wrote about Socrates. His report said, "Socrates was a teacher. He talked a lot. They killed him!"

Remember that the next time you give a speech—keep it short.

Tracey Fallon
Gloucester, New Jersey

I was working on the plural forms of words ending in "f" and "fe" with my group of special ed fifth graders. We were playing pictionary at the chalkboard—I would draw the word and a student would come up and spell it. If I drew one knife, they'd write "knife." If I drew two, they'd write "knives."

Time was running out, and I had one more word: calf. Rather than attempt a drawing of a young farm animal, I elected to draw a leg with an arrow pointing to the calf. No response. I then said it wasn't the ankle or the knee. Nothing.

I then pointed to my calf and said, "What is *this*?"

With a bewildered look, one of my students timidly replied, "Fat?"

Brenda Kennedy
Clearfield, Pennsylvania

I recently praised one of my "little" kindergarterners by saying, "Wow, you are *so* smart!"

He simply responded, "I don't want to be smarter—just *bigger*!"

Susan West
Fremont, California

Whenever I see students wearing college T-shirts, I like to ask them questions like "Where's Auburn?" or "What's a Hoya?" One day I saw a fifth grader wearing a white Tennessee jersey with a big V-O-L-S on it, so I asked him, "What are Vols?" He thought about it for a few seconds, then said with a little smile, "A-E-I-O-U."

Steve Glass
Warner Robins, Georgia

A student was flipping a coin to mark the answers on a true-false test. When everyone had finished, the boy was still flipping away. When the teacher asked why, he replied, "Oh, I'm just checking my answers."

Gloria Brown
Plantsville, Connecticut

I teach fifth grade, and on a science test I asked for the three states of matter. One student replied, "Ohio, New York, and Maryland."

Joyce Muckinhoupt
Saegertown, Pennsylvania

Two little girls in my classroom were talking about their dads.

"My daddy can speak French," one exclaimed.

"French," the other asked. "What's French?"

The first girl replied, "It's just like Spanish, but they use different words."

Bob Goodwin
Selma, North Carolina

John and Joe were having such a good time on vacation that they didn't get back in time to study for their final exam in chemistry. They told their teacher that they were on their way back when the car got a flat tire. And since they were way out in the boondocks, it took all day to get the car towed.

The teacher gave the two students the benefit of the doubt and told them that it would be okay for them to take the test a day later, with no penalty.

The next day, John and Joe couldn't believe their good luck when, sitting in separate rooms, they opened the test booklet and read the first problem. "Boy," each thought, "this is the easiest test ever! There's no way that I can fail."

Finished with the first answer, each boy turned the page and read the next question: "Which tire?"

Barbara Seidman
Woodbridge, New Jersey

"It's very generous of you, Russell, but I don't believe your resignation would help our crowded school situation."

First Day

I began my seventh year of teaching by moving down to the first grade. The first day a very earnest six-year-old asked me in the first hour if I was going to teach them to read. I smiled and said, yes, I would.

After lunch she repeated her question, and I reassured her. As I dismissed the class at the end of the day, this sweet little child burst into tears. I asked what was wrong, and she wailed, "You forgot to teach us to read!"

That was my wake-up call to the difference in time frame from upper elementary to primary.

Annette Karrer
Ridgecrest, California

At the end of a rainy day, a harried kindergarten teacher was helping each child on with his or her boots. When she got to the last little boy, she noticed that the boots looked quite small.

Undaunted, she struggled to get the boots on while the boy told her about his sister, his pet rabbit, and so on. Just as she got the boots on, he looked down and said, "These aren't my boots."

The teacher sat him down and began the even more laborious chore of removing the boots. Just as she got the last boot off, the little boy said, "They're really my brother's boots, but my mother makes me wear them anyway."

Jeff Brown
Spokane, Washington

Got Laughs?

Have a funny school story, anecdote, or vignette you'd like to share? You can send contributions to "In the Light Lane," *NEA Today*, 1201 16th St. N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Fax: 202/822-7206. E-mail: NEAToday@aol.com.

Or post your story in the "Recess" area of NEA's Web site (http://www.nea.org) or in the "Humor" topic on the NEA Teaching & Learning Message Board (keyword: NEA Teaching) on America Online.

People

Adrian Dennis/Silver Image

Sign of Two Worlds

For Florida teacher **Marlene Jacobowitz**, teaching Spanish is a trilingual affair. That's because she teaches Spanish through song—and conveys the lyrics in sign language.

"I decided it wasn't enough just to keep the beat when I could use my hands to open yet another world to my students," says Jacobowitz, a former teacher of deaf and blind children in New York.

Jacobowitz, who's spent the last 10 years at Madison Elementary in Ocala, has turned her innovative curriculum into a book, *Sing, Sign, and Learn*. It's now part of the curriculum in schools in New York and California.

"This makes learning fun, so students learn much more easily and with more enthusiasm," Jacobowitz says of her multilingual approach. "Besides, how else can you learn two languages at the same time? My students just love it."

Photos by Mark Hoffman

Hearing the Joyful Call

Evelyn Foster's job title is "student service coordinator," but that doesn't begin to tell her story.

Foster is a fixture at Barlett Yancey Senior High School in Pelham, North Carolina—and has been for 20 years. She helps run the school store, an after-school tutorial program, a course on crime and the community, family nights, a "minister's alliance," a teen gospel choir, and a gardening group.

Chris Seward

She coordinates lunches for the scholars and banquets for the athletes. And three years ago, she started a violence prevention program to educate kids on the consequences of criminal activity.

Foster's well known in Pelham, a small town just south of Danville, Virginia. But this spring, her reputation went national when NEA named her its 1996 Support Person of the Year.

Foster, a member of the Gaswell County Association of Educators, was thrilled. But, as she says, "I bubble every day. Working with these kids must be my calling. It makes me feel good and fills me with joy."

Good Grades Worth Bucks

Sally Marth is still amazed at how her community and the Milwaukee Bucks teamed up last April to inspire hundreds of kids to boost their grades.

"I was at a Bucks basketball game and happened to sit next to Senator Herbert Kohl, the team owner," recalls Marth, a physical education teacher at De Long Middle School in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

"The idea came up of involving his team to create better schools," says Marth. Working with her colleagues and the Bucks' sales director, she developed the "I've Improved" program.

The Bucks provide discounted tickets to the final game of the season to all De Long students who improve their grades two quarters in a row. Those on the honor roll must remain there if they want tickets.

"Still, we needed to rent buses and pay for the discounted tickets," Marth says. "For a lot of these kids, if you charge them a dollar, they're left out." That's when community residents stepped in with donations to make the program a reality.

"In 1991, only 112 students improved both quarters," notes Marth. "In 1996, 383 students improved. Our goal was to improve grades, and this program is doing that."

Photos by Eddie Westerman/WEA

Summer Shift

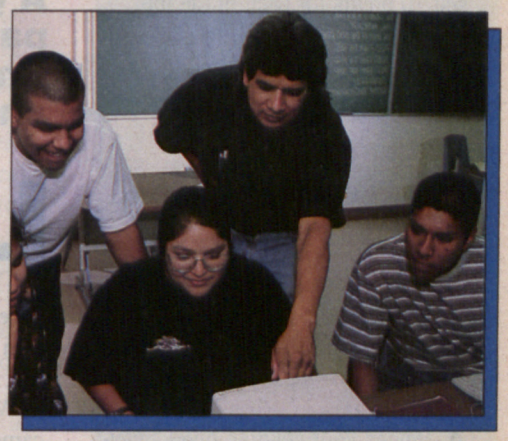
Summer jobs can make it difficult for students to attend summer school. But **Pete Guerrero** realizes that without summer school, it's difficult for some students to attend graduation.

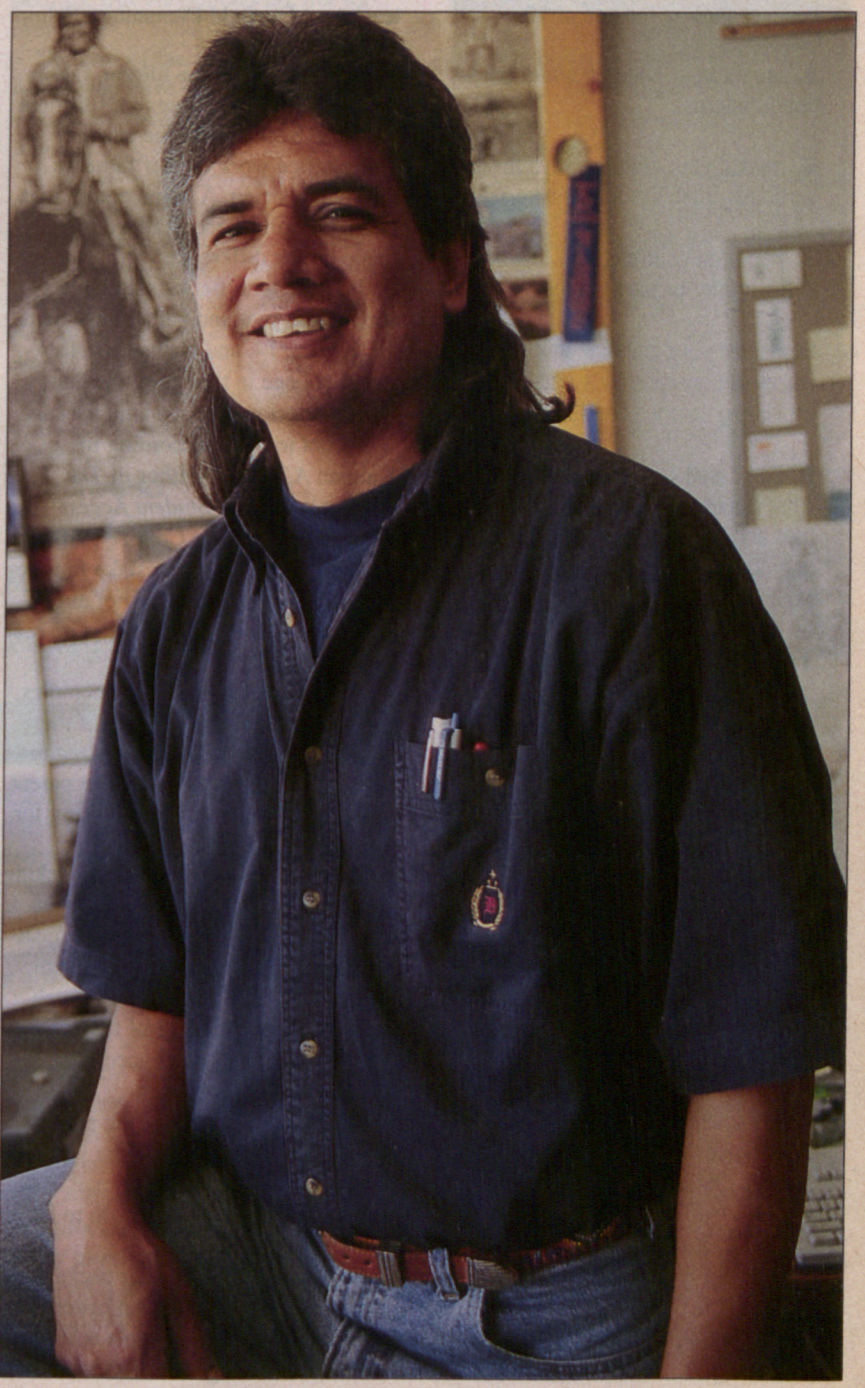
So Guerrero, a teacher at Chollas High School in Tucson, Arizona, designed the Native American Summer Institute, a program that pays kids to attend summer school to make up credits they missed during the school year. Funds come from the state's Summer Youth Employment Program.

"We have a high percentage of Native American students, and raising their graduation rate became one of our primary goals," Guerrero says.

Students work hard for their minimum wage. A two-week writing camp, community-service projects, and trips to universities are just part of the Institute's program.

"I tell the students that yes, it's a job," he notes. "But I also tell them that learning is an adventure."





Photos by Sean Justice

Live, From Twisp

Most high school students wouldn't get any air time at a typical radio station. But KVLR in Twisp, Washington isn't typical.

Debra Featherston, a music teacher at Liberty Bell Junior and Senior High School, operates KVLR with her husband, Cary. It's virtually the only station that reaches Methow Valley—which is why the town of Twisp celebrated with fireworks when they fired up the station three years ago.

And every Monday from 7 to 9 p.m., listeners can tune in to 106.3 FM to hear "Liberty Bell Live," the weekly "assignment" for the high school's communications class.

"The kids do live interviews," says Featherston. "They program all the music and all the commercials. The station normally plays a mix of country, blues, and jazz, but the students get to play all their alternative music during their time slot."

The experience is so demanding that students who take the class earn a year's worth of college credit in communications.

"The students get an immense amount of self-taught responsibility," says Featherston. "We have a certified DJ on hand at all times, but once they get in the studio, they're live on the air. It's their program."

Money

Decisions, Decisions

Go Figure

By the time your children are ready for college, they should know how to budget money for an entire year's expenses. How to get to that point? Start early. To see how well you're preparing your children, give yourself 10 points for each of the following steps you've taken:

1. Started an allowance by the age of seven.

2. Required your children to save ever since they started receiving any money.

3. Established a formula for major purchases whereby your children pay a portion—up to half the price.

4. Helped your children open a savings account by the age of 10.

5. Taught your children about compound interest.

6. Helped your children save for a particular goal, like a new bike.

7. Required your children to work at a summer or part-time job.

8. Helped your children start a business—lemonade stands count—explaining overhead and taxes.

9. Discussed with your children what would happen to them if you died and had written a letter to their guardian detailing how you would like them raised.

10. Invited your children to participate in discussions about family finances and to offer opinions on important decisions.

11. Set a goal and formula for college, including how much you will contribute and how much your children must contribute.

12. Helped your children learn to budget by providing a clothing allowance or requiring them to pay for certain expenses out of earnings.

13. Explained to your children about investing and helped them open a mutual fund account.

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100 or more: A
80 to 100: B
60 to 80: C
Below 60: Get to work!

Cutting College Costs

A good student aid package takes timing, planning, and persistence.

Like most of us, NEA member Cynthia Lovitz was hoping for some financial aid to help educate her four children. But when Becky, the eldest, applied for aid for her freshman year at Brandeis University last fall, she was turned down.

"We just started paying for it as it came," says Lovitz, a kindergarten teacher at Fairfield Elementary School in Fairfield, Maine.

To pull together the tuition, Lovitz moved from a half-time to a full-time position. Becky spent the summer doing office work for her father, a family physician. A home equity loan and an unsubsidized Stafford loan made up the difference.

But now, with Becky starting her sophomore year and her siblings Sara, 16, Jessica, 14, and Nathan, 10, looking to college in their turn, the family must get serious about an aid package.

It's not too late, according to Kalman A. Chany, author of *The Princeton Review Student Access Guide to Paying for College* (Villard Books). "The biggest mistake families make is assuming they're not eligible," says Chany. "But there is no real income cutoff."

Aid is awarded based on a complex formula that includes the size of the household, the number of children in college, and the age of the older parent.

Here are some tips from Chany for getting a good aid package:

■ Eligibility is determined by taking a snapshot of your family's finances. If you're applying for your child's freshman year, the critical period is from January 1 of the junior year in high school to December 31 of the senior year. So plan early and accelerate income into earlier years.

■ Maintain control of the process. Photocopy everything before you mail it. Send forms by certified mail. Ask the school what you could do to help your chances.

■ Negotiate for a better package. A strong bargaining chip is a better aid package from a comparable school. "What I'm seeing more and more is that the first offer that schools give is not their best offer," Chany says.

■ Don't reject student loans—their terms are much more favorable than the credit card debt you may run up to pay the tuition. All students qualify for unsubsidized Stafford loans.

■ Remember that if your child wins a scholarship, the college may reduce the size of the package it offers you. Try to convince the school to reduce the loan and work study portions of your package rather than to reduce the grant money dollar for dollar.

■ Remember that any financial decision you make from January 1 of your child's junior year in high school to January 1 of the junior year in college can ruin your chances for financial aid the following year. Common mistakes include withdrawing funds out of a pension or selling securities and realizing capital gains. Parents who remarry during the child's college years may also be unpleasantly surprised when the income of the new spouse is factored into the formula.

—Mary Rowland

David Leaming

Cynthia Lovitz (second from left) needs creative financing options to see all her children through college.

Resources

The new NEA Higher Education Loan Program℠ (NEA HELP) can help members pay for their children's college education—and help members pay for their own continuing education as well.

Specially designed to meet the needs of NEA members and their families, the program offers these benefits:

■ One-Stop Shopping—Members can apply for federal and private loans right over the phone with preapproval in as little as 24 hours.

■ Experienced Loan Counselors—NEA HELP's experienced loan counselors are available to assist members from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., ET, Monday-Friday, toll free.

■ Money-Saving Repayment Plans—flexible repayment terms available.

■ Competitive Rates—NEA members get all of the special interest rates available through federal loan programs, plus preferred rates and fees on private loans.

For more information on NEA HELP or to request applications, call the 24-hour NEA HELP Line at 800/49-COLLEGE.

Ready for Retirement?

Affording Medical Care. . .

. . . without tapping savings. That's the challenge facing this NEA member.

Name: Sue Hulbert

Age: 56

Job: Clerk-typist in the counseling center at Greece Arcadia High School in Greece, New York.

Home & Family:
Lives in Rochester, New York, with her husband, who's retired from Eastman Kodak. The couple have three adult children and recently welcomed their first grandchild.

Years Until Retirement:
Three to five

Current Challenge:
"Having enough money when I retire to take care of medical bills and other major expenses."

Options:
Medicare's coverage includes Part A (coverage for hospital care, skilled nursing home care, hospice care, and home health care) and Part B (coverage for doctor's bills, outpatient surgery, emergency room treatment, x-rays, lab tests, prescription drugs). You're entitled to Part A coverage at age 65 (as long as you've paid Social Security taxes). Part B is optional and will cost you extra.

Eileen Collins

Sue Hulbert wants to make sure she can cover her medical expenses when she retires.

Once you've signed up for Medicare, consider purchasing Medigap insurance, experts advise. This fills some of the gaps in Medicare's coverage—coinsurance, deductibles, and non-covered services.

In most states, consumers can choose from among 10 standard Medigap policies, ranging from basic benefits to an expensive but comprehensive policy. Before you buy a Medigap policy, study these policies to see how they meet your specific needs.

Also, don't forget to review your current coverage. You may already have better benefits than you can get through any of the standard Medigap plans.

Finally, consider buying long-term care insurance. Such policies typically pay a fixed amount for each day you receive long-term care, either in a nursing home or at home. The benefits usually last several years.

Long-term care insurance can help you avoid paying the staggering cost of nursing home care ($30,000 to $60,000 a year) from your income and savings. But the policies are not for everyone.

The cost of the protection is high. And if you have little or no financial resources, Medicaid will pay your way.

Read any long-term care policy carefully before signing up. Among the things you want to see are your right to payment regardless of whether you're getting "skilled," "intermediate," or "custodial" care, and the chance to buy inflation coverage, so that your policy payout will rise along with nursing home costs.

Homework:
"Managing Your Health Care Finances: Getting the Most Out of Medicare and Medigap Insurance." $12 from the nonprofit United Seniors Health Cooperative, 1331 H St. N.W., Washington, DC

Educated Investor

What are "breakpoints"?
"Breakpoint" is a term used in mutual fund sales that refers to the dollar amounts where sales commissions are reduced.

For example, if you put less than $10,000 into a mutual fund, you may pay a 5.75 percent commission. But the mutual fund probably has "breakpoints," or points where your commission is reduced. These are typically $10,000, $25,000, and $50,000. An investment of more than $50,000 may carry a commission of 4.5 percent.

You may be able to take advantage of the lower commissions even though you do not invest all of your money at once. If, say, different members of your immediate family invest in the same group of funds, all of your investment assets should go toward meeting the breakpoints. Of course, you can also buy mutual funds that don't require a load or sales commission.

Which is better, taking my retirement money in a lump sum or an annuity?
There's no "right" answer. When you retire, your employer calculates your pension benefit based on a formula that includes your years of service and a percentage of your final salary.

To convert an annual annuity benefit into a lump sum, the company looks at a mortality table to see how long you're expected to live. The company also makes an assumption about how much interest you could earn on a lump sum. You may then be offered $20,000 a year for the rest of your life or a simple payment of perhaps $190,000.

To decide which is best for you, consider how much you know about investing and how comfortable you are in managing your own portfolio. If you're healthy and come from a family whose members live into their 90's, you'd probably do better with the annuity payments. Also factor in your other assets and your ability to resist the temptation to splurge.

Financial Finds

Scholarship Basics
The As and Bs of Academic Scholarships by Debra L. Wexler, Octameron Press, Alexandria, VA. 703/836-5480. 144 pp. $7.50. Also from Octameron: *Loans and Grants from Uncle Sam: Am I Eligible and for How Much?* 48 pp. $6.

College Costs—Today
College Explorer Plus offers a wide range of data, including tuition and fee information for 2,800 undergraduate colleges and 1,200 graduate schools. For IBM PCs and compatibles. Requires DOS 3.2 or higher. $195 from College Board Publications. 800/323-7155.

College Costs—Tomorrow
Price Waterhouse Education Funding System projects college costs, funding requirements, annual contribution amounts, and funding shortfalls or excesses. Answers "what if" questions based on changes in cost/contribution variables. Microsoft Windows (versions 3.1 or higher) and DOS (version 2.0 or higher). $45. Call 800/752-6234.

Scholarship Search
College Aid Sources for Higher Education (CASH), run by National College Services in Gaithersburg, Maryland, keeps a database of all available scholarships—even the obscure ones. A search of the database costs $30. You can get a packet including an application with 42 questions by calling 800/462-2743. You don't pay until you decide to have CASH run the search.

Health Insurance
The NEA MemberCare® portfolio of health insurance plans features a Medicare Supplement Program (for NEA-R members age 65 and older) and a Long-Term Care Program. For more information about the plans and their availability in your state, contact NEA Member Benefits at 800/637-4636.

Mutual Fund Guide
A Commonsense Guide to Mutual Funds by Mary Rowland explains the strategies that successful fund managers use and offers easy-to-remember lists of "do's" and "don'ts" to help focus the busy investor. Bloomberg Press, 227 pp., $19.95.

"You've got the most important job in the world."

"So you're a teacher. That's great."

"I admire what you do."

"I take my hat off to you."

"Keep up the good work."

"It's nice to meet someone dedicated to America's kids."

There are certain things other credit cards just can't buy.

Use an ordinary credit card and you'll hear the usual pleasantries. Like "thank you" and "come again." Use an NEA Gold or School Days MasterCard® card and you're likely to hear people say something special about you. That's because the cards identify you as an education professional. They show your dedication to America's kids, and the important role you play in shaping America's future. The card not only recognizes the work you do. It saves you money, too. There's no annual fee. You get a low 5.9% Annual Percentage Rate (APR) for cash advances and balance transfers for the first five months.† And after that, you'll still be able to save. Our low 15.35% variable APR for purchases is lower than most other cards today. All in all, the NEA MasterCard cards buy what other cards can't. Call 1-800-468-7632 to apply.

5.9%
INTRODUCTORY APR†
On balance transfers and cash advances

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Annual Fee	There is no annual fee for the NEA School Days MasterCard or the NEA Premier Gold MasterCard.
Annual Percentage Rate (APR)	15.35% for purchases, which may vary.
Variable Rate Information	Your APR may vary. The APR is determined by adding one margin to the highest U.S. Prime Rate as published in the *Wall Street Journal* on the 15th of March, June, September, and December. The margin is 7.1% percentage points. On June 15, 1996 the U.S. Prime Rate was 8.25%.
Grace Period for Repayment of Balances for Purchases	At least 25 days from statement closing date.
Method of Computing the Balance for Purchases	Average daily balance (including new purchases).
Transaction Fee for Purchases	Transaction fee for the purchase of wire transfers, money orders, bets, lottery tickets, and casino gaming chips: 2% of each such purchase; $2 minimum, $10 maximum.
Transaction Fee for Cash Advances and Fees for Paying Late or Exceeding the Credit Limit	Transaction fee for Bank and ATM cash advances: 2% of each cash advance; $2 minimum, $10 maximum. Transaction fee for credit card cash advance checks: 1% of each cash advance; $2 minimum, $10 maximum. Late Payment Fee: $10. Over-the-Credit-Limit Fee: $10.

†The Annual Percentage Rate (APR) for purchases is 15.35%, which may vary. The APR for cash advances is 5.9% through your first five statement closing dates commencing the month after your account is opened. Thereafter, the APR will vary according to the variable rate information disclosure accompanying your card and will apply to both new and outstanding cash advance balances. The current indexed APR for cash advances is 15.35%, which may vary. Cash advances cannot be used to pay off or pay down another MBNA® account.

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The NEA Credit Card Program has been developed for NEA members only. If a member decides not to renew his/her membership, that person will no longer be eligible to receive the preferred rates and fees offered through the NEA Credit Card Program. If eligible, a replacement card will be offered.

The information about the costs of the card described in this application is accurate as of 6/96. The information may have changed after that date. To find out what may have changed, call us at (302) 292-3960. TTY users please call (302) 292-3989.

All applications will be subject to a confidential standard review by MBNA America. The NEA is not involved in the credit application process; standard credit procedure is followed.

The program is currently not available in Massachusetts, California, the District of Columbia, Michigan or Pennsylvania.

Any account opened in response to this offer will be governed by the laws of Delaware.

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My Turn

What's Changed in 30 Years?

By Mary Beth Blegen

A young man stood up in Humanities class in 1995 and became Edgar Degas. He read about him, he looked at his paintings, he knew him. The class learned something from that student that day. The student won't forget Edgar Degas. I sat in the back of the room.

An American History class pulled 62 pages off the Internet dealing with the dropping of the bomb on Hiroshima and Nagaski. Truman's diaries, scientists' explorations, and numerous arguments were all there.

Getting ready for a debate, the class pored over the material. On the day of the debate, I sat in the back of the room. They didn't need me to talk. They knew what they wanted to say.

Thirty years ago, I walked into a literature classroom with a textbook and enthusiasm. I stood in front of the rows of students as they answered my questions, took quizzes, and wrote multiple choice tests. I scored the tests. I marked the papers. I gave the grades.

Since then, I've kept my enthusiasm—but everything else has changed.

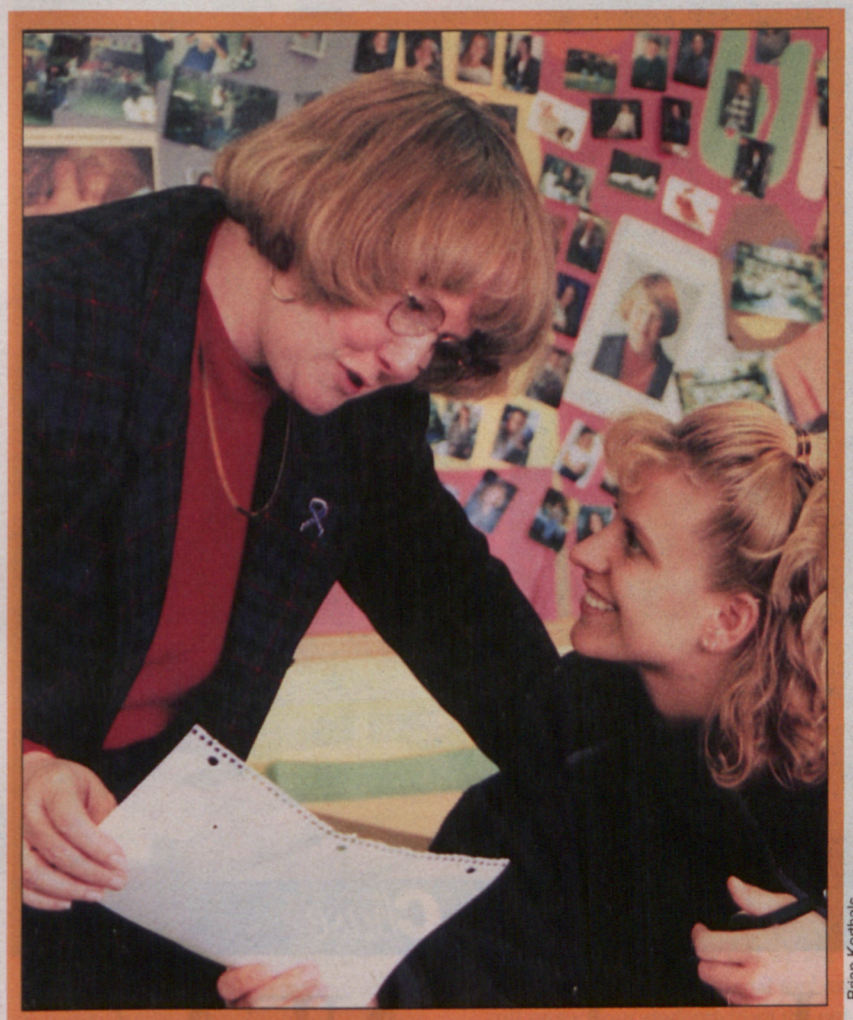
I was standing in front of a group of juniors a few years ago. Lunch was less than an hour away. I wanted them to understand the Cold War. I looked around the room and almost heard their brains clicking off one by one as they gazed at the clock, yawned, and waited.

I needed to change something. Somehow I had to engage them in the Cold War. Pineapple juice. That was it. Pineapple juice spilled from the Soviet Union out over Europe. In order to stop the spread, the United States had to contain it. What better product to describe the United States than Spam, that solid fully American product?

Therefore the question: "What do pineapple juice, Spam, and the Cold War have to do with each other?"

I brought the cans of juice. I held them over the map. The kids drew pic-tures on their maps. The Spam stood strong.

For the next few days, we talked about where the juice spilled and the impact of the spill. We talked about Containment. We talked about Communism.



Brian Korthals

Mary Beth Blegen, a 30-year NEA member, was selected as the 1996 National Teacher of the Year.

The students had to give a three- to four-minute presentation to the American Legion or the Young Communist League defending or debating the actions of the United States during the Cold War.

Was the pineapple juice and Spam a gimmick? Maybe. Necessary? Yes. Necessary because the students in my classroom needed a hook so they could hang on to the abstraction of the Cold War. My students needed something they could understand in order to learn how to think bigger. And, yes, they even needed to smile while they were doing it.

We celebrated after their presentations. We drank pineapple juice and ate Spam.

Will they remember? I think so.

My attitudes about teaching have changed drastically since those early years. The focus in my classroom today is written on a nondescript piece of paper stuck to my desk. The focus comes in two questions: "What are we doing in here today that students will take out into the world?" and "What will students do with what they are learning in this room?"

If I lose sight of those questions, my classroom changes back. It becomes teacher centered. I take charge. If I keep those questions in mind, I am always asking what is going on in the room. I am always talking with students about what they are learning and what they are not learning.

Today's kids learn when teachers set the path, act as guides, and listen. They learn when they do. They learn when they make decisions. They learn when their voices are heard.

Good teaching means looking at kids and asking what change is necessary to help them learn—to help them find the meaning in subject material, but more importantly to help them find the meaning that leads to self-discovery.

You Said It

Like our new look? If you've paged through this issue, you know now that *NEA Today*, the Association's 15-year-old flagship publication, has changed—not just on the surface, but throughout.

Bill Fischer, editor

We think the new *NEA Today* has a lot you'll like—from its more modern design to its expanded content. We've kept many of the old features—Debate, Meet, Letters, People—and added an expansive new section called Learning, with news, research, and ideas to help you in your daily work.

In the new Newsmakers section, you'll find more about NEA state and local affiliates, as well as world news, and stories about NEA members who go "beyond the call."

The Life section begins with humorous tidbits straight from your classrooms. And this section, Voices, is devoted to opinions—from celebrities, authors, and members.

With the new *NEA Today*, we recognize that more and more of you are relying on the Internet and World Wide Web as prime sources of information, so you'll see cyberspace sources noted at the end of many articles. And by the time you read this, *NEA Today* will be available through NEA's homepage at http://www.nea.org.

Let me close with a promise: I will listen to your comments—the kudos and the criticisms. I encourage you to share both with the *NEA Today* staff on a regular basis. I can be reached at NEAToday@aol.com. For a complete list of ways to reach us, see page 47.

Enjoy. See you next month.

Bill Fischer

Your Opinion

Don't forget to vote on this month's debate question: Should schools limit Internet access? You can record your vote by following the directions at the bottom of the debate on page 43. And watch this space next month for the vote tally.

Meet

Joe Di Dio

Bob Chase

Leading NEA to The 21st Century

This month, Bob Chase, a social studies teacher from Danbury, Connecticut, becomes the 118th president in NEA's 138-year history. A teaching veteran with 25 years' experience, the 53-year-old Chase has been NEA's vice-president since 1989.

Shortly after his election this past July at the NEA Representative Assembly, Chase spoke with NEA Today *staffer Anita Merina about his career—and his goals as NEA president.*

Has your career in the classroom prepared you for your new job as NEA president?
Well, if you can teach junior high school for almost 25 years, then you can do just about anything!

How did you first become active in the Association?
The way most members do. My local president asked me to chair a committee—as often happens with new people. I didn't expect it to be a big job, but that year everything broke loose in our local, and the grievance committee was busy. Once you're involved, there's something about the Association that really captures you and doesn't let go.

How will you stay in touch with what's happening in the classroom?
Every six weeks or so, I plan to spend a day teaching in a classroom, not just visiting but teaching classes in different parts of the country.

What strikes me about Washington, D.C. is that organizations here too often talk to other organizations here and make decisions, one D.C.-based group with another. This has to change.

The only way to know what's happening in the real world, the only way to know whether your decisions really make a difference, is to spend time in real schools.

You have two grown daughters in their twenties. How did raising your own children help you as an educator?
I don't know if it did. Nor do I know if being an educator helped me become a better parent. I suppose having children gives you an insight into what kids are going through and teaching kids gives you an insight into your own, but I don't know if that's a blessing or a curse. Sometimes maybe you know too much.

What are the biggest changes you've seen in education since you began teaching?
I've seen a big drop in parental involvement—not necessarily because parents don't want to be involved, but because America's family structure has changed.

Most families today either have two parents working outside the home or are led by a single parent. We—public school employees—haven't made the changes necessary to address this fundamental change.

I've also seen a change in the children attending our schools. We can't expect schools to be the same as they were 20 years ago when our student population is so very different.

Finally, access to higher education, even public higher ed, is disappearing. With budget cuts and program cuts, students don't have the same hope of attending college as they once did.

Many NEA members feel isolated—and overwhelmed. What can you say to them?
That we'll try to help overcome that isolation by offering new connections with colleagues who've been there. I think, for instance, that the new technologies NEA is now working with offer some real opportunities to help NEA members become more connected to the NEA and to each other.

What do you hope to accomplish in your term?
There are several things I'd like to see happen.

I want to see NEA become known as a risk-taking organization, an organization willing to take bold action.

NEA needs to become the nation's absolute leader in education renewal. There's no way an organization of 2.2 million members should be anything but a leader in this area.

We need to begin that leadership by establishing a clear urban agenda for the NEA. We don't really have one. The media, meanwhile, continue to paint a bleak picture of public education based on coverage that concentrates on inner-city areas. We need to see what we can do to brighten the picture for urban education.

We also need to make community coalitions a reality—we can't get anywhere without community support. We have to acknowledge that only 25 percent of the adults in America have kids in school. If we're going to improve conditions for students, we have to involve people who don't have a direct school connection. We need to reach out to non-traditional groups.

Does that include our critics, too?
I believe we need to be willing to do things differently.

For example, Steve Jobs, the high-tech entrepreneur, was in *Wired* magazine earlier this year blasting public schools and public education.

Our normal inclination would be to either ignore what he said or launch into a public war of words. But there's another option. We can get on the phone and say to someone like Jobs, "Let's sit down and talk about this." It's important to reach out to others, and I don't think we do enough of that.

This fall, I'd like to gather a group of people who are among our critics and just talk for a couple of days. Not a big public summit—just a talk about things that will have a long-term effect on education.

You're facing a great deal in the way of new responsibilities. What will you do to relax?
I was born on Cape Cod, and I always try to escape to the beach. Just being near the water rejuvenates me.

This is the sort of job that keeps you going all the time, week after week, weekend after weekend. I think it's important to take a couple of days out, to spend time with family and friends.

A final question. Why did you want to become NEA president?
Public schools made a difference in my life. I'm very much aware of that fact. It's why I became a teacher and also why I got involved in the Association—to make a difference for public education.

Debate

Should schools limit Internet access?

Yes

Bill Ragsdale teaches computer education at Harvest Park Middle School in Pleasanton, California and serves as a consultant to the NEA Center for Education Technology. His E-mail address is rags2000@ccnet.com.

This past year was the first year students at my school used the Internet. Initially we were going to give the kids free reign. But some hard lessons soon taught us that we had to limit their access. A few examples:

- When kids found that they could print out rap music lyrics, some of which contain very objectionable language, they printed and circulated the worst examples throughout the school.
- During a parent night designed to illustrate how well we were protecting students from objectionable material on the Internet, a parent, who's a police officer with the child pornography and occult division, showed us just how naive we were. In only a few minutes, he was able call up pictures of various sex acts, despite the fact we thought we'd locked all such sites.
- One student found that even though he had no E-mail account, he could send E-mail directly to the White House. He E-mailed a threat to President Clinton, giving his E-mail address as "#@$%&* you @ up yours.com." The White House Web page took this to be a valid address and sent the message along.

We first learned about the message when the Secret Service arrived, demanding to know who was sitting at the computer with a certain Internet Protocol (IP) address at the time the message was sent.

Since then, we've taken some serious steps to limit Internet access.

- A software filter for objectionable material on the Internet now blocks E-mails to the White House—better late than never. The White House shouldn't have permitted someone without a valid address to E-mail the President. Still we're grateful we've had no more visits from the Secret Service. Teachers don't fare well on bread and water.
- We now require all parents to sign a student use permit for the Internet that describes some of the consequences for improper use.
- We don't allow students access to Internet bulletin boards about specific topics.
- And we've instituted some procedural restrictions. To use a computer, a student must be working on a project for school. Kids can't surf the Web just to see what they can find.

We assign each student to a specific computer and don't allow the student to change computers without permission. Students who use vacant computers in the computer lab must log into and out of the machine, and the times are recorded. And teachers keep a log of who was on which computer along with the starting and finishing times.

A final rule: Students must get teacher permission to print material from the Internet.

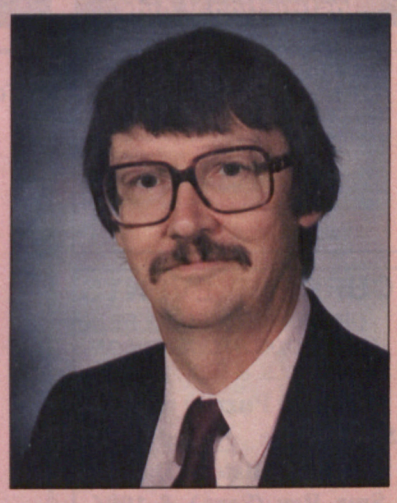
Violation of Internet rules results in swift punishment, and we keep records on the number of infractions.

The Internet can be a wonderful teaching tool. Our job is to keep students focused on its educational aspects and ensure that students use it only for educational gain.

Kids have a natural curiosity about how things work, but, more often than not, they haven't developed the sense of responsibility they need to keep that curiosity in check. Until they do, it's our job to protect kids from themselves.

No

Les Snavely is a media specialist at Boman Public School in Boman, North Dakota, and a member of the North Dakota Education Association board of directors. His E-mail address is snavely@sendit.sendit.nodak.edu.



Bowman, North Dakota is 185 miles southwest of Bismarck, 500 miles from Minneapolis, and 500 miles from Denver. The nearest "big city" is Bismarck.

Technology is crucial to kids in rural—even remote—locations like Bowman. The computer and the Internet are really the only way they have to access certain information. To restrict Internet use here would be to stifle education.

Yes, there are senseless and silly sites on the Web—and some that are downright disgusting. But the same is true of any type of media.

With printed material, we've learned to filter the garbage from the good stuff. We can do the same with the Internet.

The question is: How can we use the Internet as an educational tool and still protect our students from the outrageous? I have two suggestions:

- First, educators who work with students and computers must be skilled in using the Internet. It's not enough to be excited about the educational possibilities. Educators must also be aware of the Internet's darker side. Only then can we—by positive example—discourage students from accessing it.
- Second, educators must establish a written policy for Internet use that clearly states the expectations for every computer user and the penalties for misuse.

My own district has such a policy—I'm the one who wrote it. It leaves no doubt that any student who hacks, flames (keyboards an outrageous message), destroys, degrades, or damages files, or who accesses inappropriate materials, will lose computer privileges for the year.

For a kid who's really excited about using the Internet—and who among them isn't?—this is harsh punishment indeed.

My school has had access to the Internet for four years. In that time, only three of our 600 K-12 students have lost privileges, primarily for sending inappropriate messages.

At our school, we also feel it's important to supervise kids using the Internet. While we can't stand and look over their shoulders every second, we do watch and are aware of what students are doing in the classroom and in the computer lab.

I'm continually amazed at the power of the computer to teach. Case in point: Four years ago, three of our seventh graders were using the Internet to work on a project with three students in Belgium. They came to me, distressed, explaining that the Belgian students asked to correspond in French because they didn't speak much English.

When my students explained they didn't speak French, the Belgian students suggested they write in German.

When the kids came to me again, I pretended to be surprised that they knew only one language, but I assured them that everything would work out fine. And it did.

Now those same three girls are in high school. Two of them are studying Spanish, one is studying German. Did their Internet experience push them to expand their language abilities? I like to think so.

We have always supported students' right to learn and right to free speech. Now that technology has widened learning's horizons, we shouldn't retreat from our principles.

And What's Your Opinion?

Which debater best reflects where you stand? To agree with the "Yes" side, send an E-mail message to **vote-yes@neatoday.nea.org**. To record a "No," address your E-mail to **vote-no@neatoday.nea.org**. Please note your message subject as **NEA Today September Debate**. Vote by September 5. *NEA Today* will present the tally in the October issue.

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Publications

To help teachers to help children, read
I Didn't Know It Was Mine
by Arnold Erickson,
who was a **teacher advocate** before they were *cool.*
$15, plus $3. S&H to:
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Ashtabula, Ohio 44004

Organizer for teachers has calendar, tele. record, and more. $24.95 includes S&H. LRW Publications, LAVDOC4, POB 2399, Landover Hills, MD 20784. 301/577-8532.

Health Resources

PROJECT R.E.A.C.H.

(Raising Educator Awarness Concerning Health), a How To Manual for Promoting Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection in Your School Community: This step-by-step guide provides members with suggestions for raising awareness about the importance of early detection screening, Available October 1996 from the NEA Health Information Network. Please call 202/822-7570.

Software

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Videos

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Employment

Teacher/principal jobs nationwide. SASE to NTC, Box 267, Boston, MA 02117; 617/267-3204.

Miscellaneous

Humor Newsletter for Educators. 4 qtrly issues $10. Sample $3. Learning Laffs Qtrly Review, 5428 Pleasant Ave., So., Mpls., MN 55419. LLaffs@aol.com

EDUMART: Internet educational supply marketplace. Contests, projects, new products, local stores. http://www.edumart.com

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HOTTEST NEW STORIES ON TV THIS FALL ARE "SCHOOL STORIES"

Feeling Underappreciated? Misunderstood? Frustrated no one ever seems to hear what you're doing in your school? We're inviting the general public and all NEA members to take a front row seat in some of America's most interesting classrooms starting Sunday October 13th, 1996 12:30 PM EST on the Learning Channel.

Parents, politicians, business leaders, and educators all will marvel at an innovative North Carolina school-to-work program that has transformed a one time mall rat into a young man a German multinational company is eager to hire. They'll feel the joy of a Burrillville Rhode Island English teacher as she sings ballads and shares her own love of learning with students. They'll be inspired by a bus driver and school cafeteria manager who are struggling to fulfill *lifelong* dreams of becoming teachers.

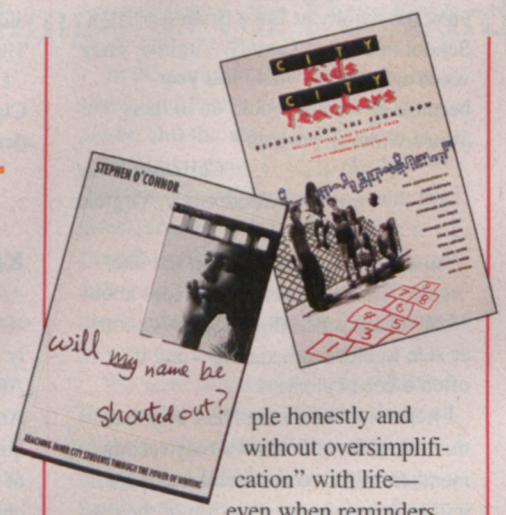
School Stories, a co-production of NEA and the Learning Channel, will let parents, families and communities know what is *really* happening in our schools.

Books

What Works in Urban Education

There's more to urban teaching than dodging bullets—a lot more.

Will My Name Be Shouted Out? Reaching Inner City Students Through the Power of Writing
Stephen O'Connor
Simon & Schuster, 382 pp., $23.50



You probably haven't read much about good teaching in inner-city public schools. What you have read probably zoomed in on urban school failure or on a few inner-city educators dubbed miracle workers by the media.

What you'll read in these two books is real. Stephen O'Connor's moving account, *Will My Name Be Shouted Out?*, is about how good teaching helps kids make sense of their world—even when much of what they see around them is senseless. It's about how creative writing gives kids a tool to "grapple honestly and without oversimplification" with life—even when reminders of life's tenuousness are everywhere.

An author and artist-in-residence, O'Connor pulls from his daily journals a story about life as a creative writing teacher at a middle school in Harlem.

This is a teacher's story—full of students, full of students' writing, full of classroom details only an educator would love. There are few miracles and no miracle workers, but just like in your classroom, wonderful things happen.

City Kids, City Teachers: Reports from the Front Row
William Ayers and Patricia Ford, eds.
The New Press, 345 pp., $16

"What is it about the presence of large numbers of poor, African-American, or Latino city kids in your schools that makes those places—wonderful?"

That's the disarming question William Ayers and Patricia Ford bring to their essay collection, *City Kids, City Teachers.* The book's two dozen essays provide a roundabout answer in the form of students' writing, teachers' lesson plans, and inspiring pieces by big names like Ossie Davis, Deborah Meier, and James Baldwin.

This book's value is in the sum of its parts. *City Kids* provides a real view of urban education, not the hideous or hilarious one most often presented by reporters and sitcom script writers.

Yes, sometimes "reality bites"—but, in this case, reality is a welcome relief.

—Stefanie Weiss

Books by NEA Members

And the Tardy Bell Rings

Jada Ledford Daves. *Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co., 173 pp., $19.95. To order, call 800/228-0810.* A first-year teacher in a rural high school tells all.

Parent's Guide to Literacy for the 21st Century: Pre-K through Grade 5
Janie Hydrick. *National Council of Teachers of English, 97 pp., $8.95 for NCTE members, $11.95 for non-members. For details, call 217/328-3870.* Hundreds of easy, no-cost ways parents and teachers can work together to support literacy.

Cappy the Lonely Camel
Donald Rubinetti, illustrated by Liisa Chauncy Guida. *Silver Burdett Press, 32 pp., $5.95 paperback.* A poignant story about prejudice. For kids ages 6-8.

NEA Professional Library Top 10 List

1 *Portfolio Practices: Thinking Through the Assessment of Children's Work,* by Steve Seidel, et al. ($14.95) Learn the "nuts and bolts" of student portfolios and discover fresh ways to think about assessment. (#1858-3-00-FB)

2 *Integrated Thematic Teaching.* NEA Teacher-to-Teacher Books. ($9.95) Six stories from teachers who are successfully interweaving disciplines into a tapestry that makes the curriculum come alive. (#2909-7-10-FB)

3 *Bullyproof: A Teacher's Guide on Teasing and Bullying for Use with Fourth and Fifth Grade Students,* by Nan Stein and Lisa Sjostrom. ($15.95) "Bullyproof" your classroom with these teacher-tested lessons. (#1873-7-10-FB)

4 *Building Parent Partnerships.* NEA Teacher-to-Teacher Books. ($9.95) Get this book if you want to explore new ways to involve today's families in their children's learning. (#2911-9-10-FB)

5 *Moving Toward an Integrated Curriculum in Early Childhood Education,* by Dianne Lawler-Prince, Jennifer L. Altieri, and Mary Kay Cramer. ($12.95) This example-filled book gives you practical ideas to make learning more meaningful, real, and relevant. (#0367-5-10-FB)

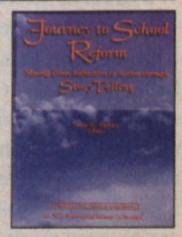
6 *Multiple Intelligences.* NEA Teacher-to-Teacher Books. ($9.95) Find out how your colleagues are adapting their teaching strategies to take advantage of the seven intelligences. (#2910-0-10-FB)

7 *Pitfalls and Potholes: A Checklist for Avoiding Common Mistakes of Beginning Teachers,* by Barbara A. Murray and Kenneth T. Murray. ($4.50) The title says it all. (#2151-7-10-FB)

8 *Learning and Working: Basics for Children,* by Dorothy Rich. ($11.95) Helps middle school (and younger) students begin to develop the skills they need to succeed in the work world. (#2002-2-10-FB)

9 *A Dozen Things Successful First-Year Teachers Do,* by Mary Clement. ($4.50) This checklist reveals the secrets of surviving the first year of teaching. (#2153-3-10-FB)

10 *Journey to School Reform: Moving from Reflection to Action through Storytelling.* David K. Wallace, editor. ($12.95) This practical guide will help you connect school reform to student success, show you how to facilitate the storytelling process, and inspire you to include the diverse voices of the school community in your change efforts. (#1871-0-10-FB)



This month's rankings are based on year-to-date sale for titles published since January 1996. All the books listed above are published by the NEA Professional Library, a service for NEA members financed solely by the sale of books and other professional development materials to the education community.

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Letters

No Widgets Here

Should teacher pay be based on student achievement? Deloz Lenord (Debate, May) says "yes," but she invalidates her argument in its second paragraph.

"If we want to improve public education," Lenord states, "teachers, parents, the community, and the government must all have the same vision, buy into it, and go the extra mile to achieve it."

Yes, we must work together, and therefore must all be held accountable. But please explain to me why I should be held accountable if any of the other partners in education drop the ball. And exactly where does the responsibility of the student fit into this equation?

I work with human beings, not widgets. I cannot control all aspects of their lives.

Kathy Duhoski
Larksville, Pennsylvania

Welcome Mat Out

I had to laugh after reading "In Experience, Pennsylvania Teachers Lead the Nation" (Grassroots, May).

I left Pennsylvania in 1978 after receiving my teaching credential because there were only two ways to get a job there: 1) Wait until one of the experienced teachers there passed away. 2) Get a relative elected to the school board.

Guess where I moved? Nevada, one of those states with the least experienced teaching forces. I will be forever thankful that the Clark County School District in Las Vegas, Nevada, gave me my start and continues to hire the "inexperienced." New teachers, you are welcome here!

Deborah Slauzis
Las Vegas, Nevada

Where's the Justice?

I'm an example of a good teacher who has been denied tenure for bad reasons (Legal, May).

In 1993, I started work in a Greensburg, Pennsylvania school. For two years, I was observed repeatedly and received satisfactory ratings. At the end of the second year, I was supposed to get tenure.

On the last day of school in June1995, I was called into a meeting with three administrators and told there were major problems with my teaching performance—and that these problems had existed for two years.

This was news to me. I'd had no prior complaints from anyone.

Since I filed a grievance, I've been through a series of harassing observations and intimidating meetings. The stress was so bad I miscarried at 20 weeks.

This past June, I was let go and now risk losing my teaching certificate over some unknown personality or political problem my principal apparently has with me.

Where is the justice in this? With help from my local Association, I will continue to fight this matter in the hopes that I will be vindicated.

Robin Hlebechuk
Greensburg, Pennsylvania

No More Blocks

As a music teacher in Virginia, I was disturbed by your recent article on "4x4" block scheduling (Innovation, April).

We have had this "innovative" teaching method in Virginia for four years, and it's killing the music programs in high schools where the schedule doesn't allow for daily meetings of band, orchestra, and chorus. In those districts, the music student enrollments have dropped by as much as half of what they were "pre-block."

In fact, strict "4x4" scheduling limits many electives drastically, because there isn't enough time in kids' schedules to take them.

Let's at least give a balanced presentation when discussing innovation. Perhaps, next month, you could interview the faculty at Lake Braddock High School in Fairfax County, Virginia. They voted against the "4x4" last year because of what it would do to their award-winning program.

Christine Abeel
Woodbridge, Virginia

I'm deeply concerned about the one-sided view your article provides about "4x4" block scheduling. There is another side to block scheduling—and it's often a horror story.

I hope that before the NEA endorses this schedule, and sends a rosy recommendation of it to the members, there will be a serious presentation of the disadvantages, which are many.

According to a 1992 study by Gary Hall, disciplines that depend on continuous study suffer. Classes in performance arts suffer. Students who drop out do not return. Students who do return are deficient in their skills. Only about three-fourths of the class time is used effectively. And there are more.

I urge NEA members to check out the Music Educators National Conference's publication "Scheduling Time for Music." It offers clear, concise information about block scheduling, including teachers' comments about the effects of the four-period day. For more information, contact Gail Crum or Kathy Welling at MENC, 1806 Robert Fulton Dr., Reston, VA 22091, 703/860-4000.

Jo Caldwell
Lynnwood, Washington

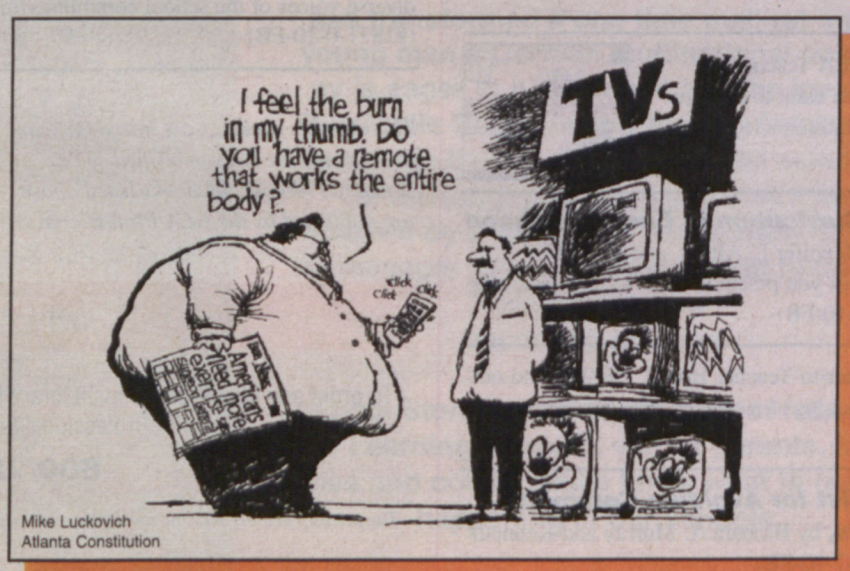
Your article on block scheduling didn't make enough of one factor I contend is the most crucial to student success—and that's class size.

Teachers at the Florida school you write about have 75 to 80 kids in four classes—20 or fewer per class—plus an 85-minute planning period during the day.

In my 22 years of teaching, only once did I have a year with only 20 students. That year, I felt that I was truly teaching.

Let's say it loudly, clearly, and often: Class size does make a difference in student achievement—and teacher sanity.

Dawn Williams
San Luis Obispo, California



Mike Luckovich
Atlanta Constitution

Kids With Attitude

As a school psychologist working in the public schools, I was particularly interested to read "Kids with Attitude—Are Separate Schools the Answer?" (Cover story, April). But I quickly became disheartened by the use of the term "troublemakers" to describe children who suffer from mental and emotional illnesses.

I object to the use of a damaging label like "problem kid" for any child, particularly when it's coming from an association of educators who are committed to the well-being of all children.

Noreen Smyth
Cleveland, Ohio

I'm not surprised to find success in an alternative school that employs positive discipline, inclusion, small classes, close monitoring, and most of all, a caring staff. Gateway's students, teachers, and administrators are to be highly commended.

Still, I disagree with those who believe that "getting rid of the troublemakers so teachers can really teach" is the answer. A few reasons:

1. All students are at-risk for troublemaking behavior. Teachers in any public school could remove 10 percent of the most visible troublemakers, and by the following week, the void would be filled by other students.

2. We teachers actually earn our money by teaching those hard-to-teach students.

3. By getting rid of the "troublemakers," regular classroom teachers miss many learning opportunities to improve teaching strategies.

4. Separate schools for "troublemakers" work in opposition to inclusion.

5. Separate schools for "troublemakers" could easily lead to segregation by race and gender.

6. Putting "troublemakers" in alternative schools signals to all who are paying attention that we are failing in our mission as individual teachers: to teach all children.

Jim Babcock
Horton, Kansas

It would be heaven to get rid of the troublemakers and non-students—a

A Letter From: Spokane

The Two Washingtons (or Postcards From the Edges)

This past July, we traveled 3,000 miles—from Washington State to Washington, D.C.—to attend the NEA Representative Assembly. It was the first time either of us had visited the nation's capital and the first time we'd been to the NEA RA.

Washington, D.C. and Washington State are a country apart—and a world apart. To us, the contrast was striking.

To cut to the quick, here are the top 10 things that surprised us about our week "inside the beltway" and "inside the Association."

1. Spokane (population 350,000) is located in the northeast corner of Washington with hundreds of lakes surrounding the city, forests to the north, wheat fields to the south, and Seahawks, Sonics, and Mariners 300 miles to the west. At home, the air is dry and the water clear.

In Washington, D.C. (population about 1 million), the air is full of water, and the water is full of mud.

2. Washington, D.C. is big in scale—some of the buildings are massive—and very fast-paced. Still, it was friendlier than we expected. We met tour guides, waitresses, even Marines based near D.C., who all took the time to wish us well.

We were surprised to see so many flags waving. When we were there, all of them were flying at half-mast to honor those killed in the bombing in Saudi Arabia.

3. The NEA Representative Assembly is much grander in scale than the Washington Education Association's RA. We'd heard it was big, but we didn't realize how big until we got there. It was huge!

4. Given the size of the event, almost everything at the RA was better organized than we imagined. The voting process at the NEA RA was very smooth. It surprised us that 10,000 delegates could vote so quickly.

5. We didn't know anything about caucuses before the RA. NEA activists have one for just about everything—even funny ones, like the beer caucus. Stephen's thinking of starting up one for teachers who are amateur radio operators.

6. Washington, D.C. has a clear sense of history that has no parallel in Spokane—or anywhere else in Washington State. Monuments and buildings exist in D.C. that were erected prior to the Civil War, when all of Washington State was still virgin forests and plains.

7. We were dazzled and invigorated by D.C.'s diversity—cultural, racial, and social. Spokane is very homogenous, very white.

8. We would trade our buses for Washington, D.C.'s subway system any day. We found the D.C. Metro to be clean, efficient, economical, and safe.

9. The fireworks display at the Washington Monument on the Fourth of July was impressive—but not as big a surprise to us as the fireflies. We don't have fireflies at home.

10. We were pleased to realize that whether we were voicing our opinions at the RA or touring Mt. Vernon, we felt proud to be citizens of the world's greatest democracy.

Stephen Lelonde teaches Greek mythology and video production at University High School. Eileen Garcia teaches world studies and family and consumer science at Evergreen Junior High School. Both schools are in the Central Valley School District in Spokane, Washington.

colleague of mine prefers the term "lumps"—in my classes.

But I've devised my own method for being allowed to teach. I conduct a daily repetition of one class during lunch. The academically motivated are given passes, they bring their lunch to my room, and I teach them what I am unable to teach during the regular class session.

In that way, the "good" students are not denied their education by those who merely come to class to play and disturb others.

Gerald Lunderville
Long Beach, California

Shame on you for your headline "Kids With Attitude." What kind of attitude? A good attitude? A positive attitude? A poor attitude?

Yes, I know that "attitude" is a synonym for poor attitude. The slang usage has been around so long that youngsters have never heard the word "attitude" used properly. When someone tells them they have a good attitude, they're confused.

In the future, I hope you use words properly. Please don't fall prey to the bad language syndrome.

Ursulo Cook
Fontana, California

Schools Under Fire

Your response to *U.S. News & World Report*'s article attacking teachers (National News, April) neglected to respond to the magazine's shameless solicitation. In the very same issue, an advertisement asks educators to purchase *U.S. News* for classroom use.

It seems to me the people at *U.S. News* want it all—a clear avenue for union bashing *and* the opportunity to enroll union members in their *U.S. News* Education Program. I don't believe we, as educators, should allow them to have it all.

Denise Carlini
Brockway, Pennsylvania

Yes, ABC and *U.S. News* made me angry. So did your article.

I know that removing tenure would turn teaching positions into political appointments, a hiring strategy that has produced limited success—at best—in other fields.

But when, oh when, will the NEA wake up to the widespread—and not unreasonable—perception of its role as defender of mediocrity?

There is not a single person in this country who has not personally dealt with at least one rotten, indifferent, just plain incompetent teacher.

When NEA displays its eternal reluctance to even discuss the existence of these people, it might as well be publicly supporting The Flat Earth Society.

Everyone else knows there are people in the classroom who should be rooted out of the profession. Why can't the NEA admit it?

Peter Greene
Cochranton, Pennsylvania

Who are the teacher bashers—and what do they hope to gain?

The first great basher is the media itself. Media conglomerates corrupt our children with prime-time filth, then shift the blame to teachers and their organizations.

The second great bashers are vocal parents who neglect their children and lead lives devoid of moral values. What easier way to excuse your own failures than to blame teachers?

And the third great set of bashers are politicians. Their aim is to divert money away from public education and into corporate interests. What's the easiest way to do this? Blame the teachers for being incompetent, of course.

Teachers are not the problem. The only problem is that teachers are the sole segment of our society 100 percent dedicated to the education of our children.

Raymond Maykovich
Patton, Pennsylvania

Carr's Legacy

I noted with great sadness the passing of former NEA executive secretary Dr. William G. Carr (News in Brief, April). I remember his undying love for the education profession and the myriad ways he helped Overseas Dependent Schools and the Overseas Education Association.

Under Dr. Carr's leadership, NEA pushed for a law guaranteeing overseas teachers salaries equal to those of stateside teachers—then sued to enforce it. Overseas teachers collected an estimated $65 million in back pay as a result. Without Dr. Carr and the NEA, the uphill struggle could not have been won.

I know that other overseas teachers, both past and present, will join me in paying tribute to a considerate and caring gentleman and leader.

Cecil Driver
Blacksburg, Virginia

Let's Talk

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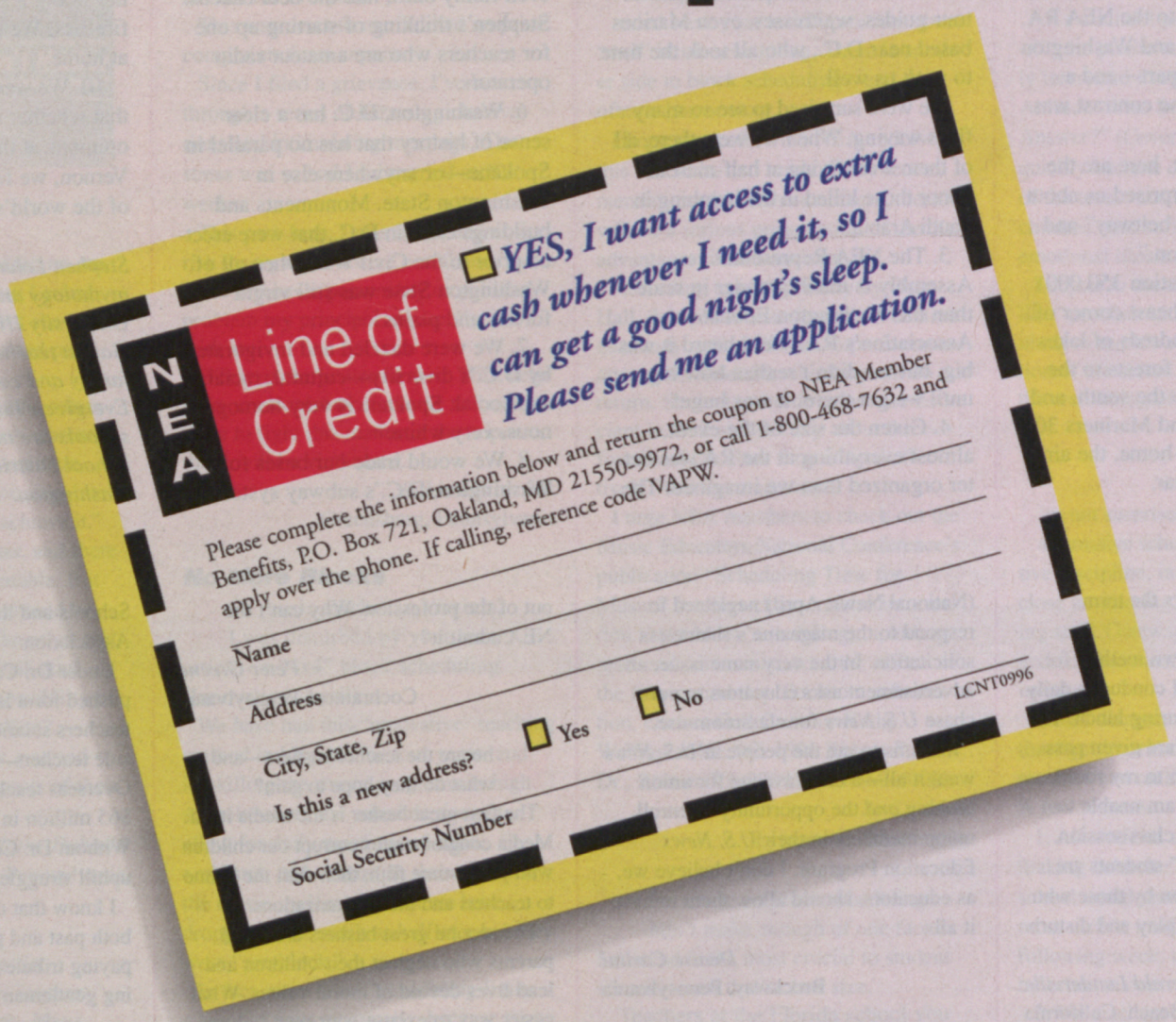
Letters are edited for length and clarity.

Prescription for a good night's sleep.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The 1996-97

Resolutions

of the National Education Association

As adopted by delegates to the
NEA Representative Assembly
July 2-5, 1996
Washington, D.C.

FOREWORD

The Constitution of the National Education Association indicates that the goals of the Association shall be the ten goals stated in the Preamble of the Constitution. These goals are, therefore, regularly set forth in a statement of resolutions adopted by the Representative Assembly.

Resolutions are formal expressions of opinion, intent, belief, or position of the Association. They shall set forth general concepts in clear, concise language, shall be broad in nature, shall state the positions of the Association positively and without ambiguity, and shall be consistent with the goals of the Association as stated in the Preamble.

A-15. Funding of Higher Education

The National Education Association supports the maintenance and expansion of funding for higher education, including programs of institutional and scholar support, research grants, support for the historically Black and developing institutions, and student financial assistance to assure access and choice for all qualified students — regardless of personal financial means — who wish to pursue higher education. The Association believes that student need, as well as enrollment, should be a criterion for funding postsecondary education. The Association further believes that need-based student financial assistance should be available through all higher education institutions as well as governmental agencies. (86, 89)

A-16. Higher Education Research and Study Grants

The National Education Association believes that both the governmental and private sectors should provide research and study grants to higher education faculties in all academic areas. Such grants should be awarded on the basis of merit without discrimination. The dissemination of grants should not be used to influence university decisions and policies.

The Association believes that the process of study and research grants provided should influence neither undergraduate nor graduate curriculums until such time as the research is completed and systematically integrated into the curriculums.

The Association further believes that our national economic well being is dependent upon the expansion of the highest quality research and training in our professional and graduate schools as well as the recruitment and training of a diverse and highly skilled workforce.

The Association further believes that academic freedom applies to research and the dissemination of research results. (85, 96)

A-17. Federal Impact Aid

The National Education Association supports funding to maintain quality education for students in school districts impacted by federal policies, lands, activities, and installations. A financial crisis exists in many impacted areas because of insufficient, temporary, year-to-year appropriations.

The Association urges a permanent solution to the financial problems of severely impacted school districts, ensuring federal support at least to the degree that their local revenues are impaired or their costs increased.

The Association also endorses the concept of a national payments-in-lieu-of-taxes program. This endorsement does not affect the Association's continued support of current impact aid programs. The establishment of any payments-in-lieu program shall not adversely affect any locality currently receiving impact aid. (70, 94)

A-18. Education of Refugee Children and Children of Undocumented Immigrants

The National Education Association believes that, regardless of the immigration status of students or their parents, every student has the right to a free public education in an environment free from harassment. The Association also believes that the determination of citizenship status is the responsibility of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, not of educational systems or their employees. (80, 96)

A-19. Extracurricular Funding

The National Education Association believes that every public school student must have an opportunity to participate in school sanctioned and funded extracurricular programs.

The Association urges that equitable funds for transportation, facilities, equipment, and remuneration of staff be provided for all school-sanctioned extracurricular activities. Funding should be equitably distributed between athletic and non-athletic extracurricular activities. The Association believes that extracurricular fundraising is not an acceptable substitute for district funding of extracurricular activities. (75, 96)

A-20. Educational/Economic Stability of States

The National Education Association believes that the educational well-being of the country depends upon the economic health of each of the regions, states, and localities.

The Association supports efforts to alleviate the effects of unemployment and supports retraining and appropriate job-creation legislation.

The Association supports efforts to correct policies that contribute to the particular economic difficulties of individual regions, states, and localities. (81, 93)

A-21. Tax Reform

The National Education Association supports tax reform and believes that it should —

a. Increase tax fairness and raise revenue necessary to finance quality public education and other public services

b. Prevent excessive reliance on property tax or any other single tax

c. Reflect the findings of comprehensive studies of the total individual and corporate tax burden

d. Assure a tax burden distribution that reflects the ability to pay and that safeguards family subsistence

e. Assure that statewide uniformity in property tax effort be required

f. Provide for increased local and state funding of public education

g. Not be used to place arbitrary maximum limits on any state or local government's ability to spend or tax, particularly since such limits have a negative impact on the full funding of schools

h. Eliminate tax laws and rulings that are harmful to education employees and educational needs. (78, 96)

A-22. Financial Crisis

The National Education Association believes that free public education is in a financial crisis. The Association seeks to maintain and expand educational programs for students by seeking public and legislative financial support. The Association believes that quality education requires adequate personnel, teaching materials, and supplies as priorities to be considered in the event of financial crisis.

The Association opposes the establishment of ad hoc classrooms in the event of school closures. (75, 94)

A-23. Educational Bureaucracy

The National Education Association believes that expanding the educational bureaucracy severely limits optimal classroom instruction. Affiliates should work toward a teacher-led educational system that will reduce bureaucracy. (77, 96)

A-24. Improving Neglected Educational Facilities

The National Education Association believes that because many educational facilities are in a state of crisis, as evidenced by decay, neglect, and continuing deterioration, such institutions must be provided with the necessary financial resources to increase staff and to provide improved instructional materials and adequate physical facilities.

The Association further believes that the community, parents, students, teachers, and educational support personnel must be effectively involved in designing programs to implement positive change. (69, 95)

A-25. Charter and Nontraditional Public School Options

The National Education Association supports innovation in public education. The Association believes that when concepts such as charter schools and other nontraditional school options are proposed, all school employees must be directly involved in the design, implementation, and governance of these programs.

The Association further believes that plans should not negatively impact the regular public school program and must include adequate safeguards covering contract and employment provisions for all employees, voluntary participation, health and safety standards for all students and employees, nondiscrimination and equal educational opportunity, staffing by licensed professional staff, and financial responsibility. Programs must be adequately funded, must include start-up monies, must not divert current funds from the regular public school programs, and must contain appropriate procedures for regular periodic assessment and evaluation. (93)

A-26. Deleterious Programs

The National Education Association believes that the following programs and practices are detrimental to public education and must be eliminated: privatization, performance contracting, tax credits for tuition to private and parochial schools, voucher plans (or funding formulas that have the same effect as vouchers), planned program budgeting systems (PPBS), and evaluations by private, profit-making groups.

The Association believes that proposals that would allow or foster the flow of public monies to private, parochial or sectarian schools; the resegregation of the schools; a selectivity in admissions; the employment of unlicensed or uncertified educators; and a weakening of collective bargaining protections would also be detrimental to the health and well-being of the public schools and should be defeated.

The Association also believes that tax credit programs, management-by-objective systems, block grants, and revenue sharing programs have at times been implemented in ways that are harmful to public education. The Association therefore calls for a monitoring of such programs and a concerted effort by the Association and its affiliates to prevent such abuses. (74, 95)

A-27. Federally or State-Mandated Choice/Parental Option Plans

The National Education Association believes that federally or

state-mandated parental option or choice plans compromise the Association's commitment to free, equitable, universal, and quality public education for every student. Therefore, the Association opposes such federally or state-mandated choice or parental option plans.

The Association believes that local districts, in partnership with state and federal governments, must provide a quality education for every student by securing sufficient funding to maintain and to enhance excellence in each local public school district.

The Association continues to support alternative programs for specific purposes in the public schools. (89)

A-28. Voucher Plans and Tuition Tax Credits

The National Education Association believes that voucher plans and tuition tax credits or funding formulas that have the same effect — under which pre-K through 12 nonpublic school education is subsidized by tax monies — undermine public education, reduce the support needed to adequately fund public education, and have the potential for racial, economic, and social segregation of children. The Association opposes all attempts to establish and/or implement such plans. (70, 96)

A-29. Media Utilization

The National Education Association believes that the broadcasting industry must serve the public interest and educational process. The Association encourages the creative and innovative use of media for improving instruction. It is essential that teachers or their designees have the right to record programs off the air and play them back on a delayed basis sufficient to meet the needs of effective teaching.

The Association further believes that the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS television), National Public Radio (NPR), and expanding cable television (CATV) should provide communication services to education. Federal regulations should guarantee the reservation of at least 20 percent of the channel capacity of CATV systems for public school access and other public purposes.

The Association urges its affiliates to become involved in the program development and utilization of each of these media resources. The Association further urges the continuation of local, state, and federal financial support for public broadcasting. (81, 96)

A-30. Community Education

The National Education Association believes that the concept of community education encourages schools to provide leadership in solving community problems.

The Association urges its state affiliates to become involved in the promotion, expansion, and implementation of community education programs in their states. (77, 86)

A-31. Rural Education

The National Education Association supports a strong rural educational system and the preservation of the community infrastructure in rural America.

The Association believes that rural areas contain a range of conditions that make them unique and urges development of programs that recognize and deal with rural needs. The Association recognizes the consolidation of rural school attendance areas is not necessarily the answer to the needs of rural education. The Association recognizes that equal per pupil funding may not provide equal education. The Association further urges its affiliates to support equal educational programs and the equitable funding of such programs. Neither shall be dependent on geographical location and/or density of population.

The Association advocates that fair and equitable consideration be given to rural needs when federal education programs are proposed and/or funded.

The Association and its affiliates should encourage institutions of higher education and state agencies to promote training of personnel that will reflect the special needs and problems of rural schools. (76, 95)

A-32. Urban Development

The National Education Association believes that professional organizations should be concerned about the quality of life in our cities and should advocate policies or programs concerning land use, zoning, urban development, economic growth, plant closings, mass transit, rent subsidy, or other issues vitally affecting patterns of community development and subsequently the quality of education in our schools. (74, 88)

A-33. U.S. Federal Schools

The National Education Association believes that all federal schools, except those under the control of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, should come under the auspices of the U.S. Department of Education.

The Association further believes that all dependents of U.S. government employees overseas and in Section VI schools should be afforded the opportunity to attend such schools and is unalterably opposed to any attempt by Congress to privatize any of these federal schools. (80, 95)

B. ADVANCE THE CAUSE OF EDUCATION FOR ALL INDIVIDUALS

B-1. Early Childhood Education

The National Education Association supports early childhood education programs in the public schools for children from birth through age eight. The Association supports a high-quality program of transition from home and/or preschool to the public kindergarten or first grade. This transition should include communication and cooperation among parents, the preschool staff, and the public school staff. The Association believes that such programs should be held in facilities that are appropriate to the developmental needs of these children. The Association further believes that early childhood education programs should include a full continuum of services for parents and children, including child care, child development, developmentally appropriate and diversity-based curricula, special education, and appropriate bias-free screening devices. Early childhood education programs also must be sensitive to and meet the physical, social, mental, and emotional health and nutritional needs of children.

The Association believes that early childhood education programs should maintain small group size with appropriate staff/child ratios for each age. These programs must be staffed by the appropriate ratio of teachers, administrators, and support staff who are prepared in early childhood education and child development. Males should be encouraged and recruited to enter and be actively involved in early childhood education. Preparation programs for staff should lead to credentials consistent with the educational standards in each state.

The Association recognizes the importance of parental involvement in a child's development. The Association further supports the provision of training programs that prepare parents to take an active role in the child's education. These programs should provide an awareness of the expectations that will be placed on the child as well as familiarization with new policies and procedures that the child will experience in the new environment.

The Association believes that federal legislation should be enacted to assist in organizing the implementation of fully funded early childhood education programs offered through the public schools. These programs should be available to all children on an equal basis and should include mandatory kindergarten with compulsory attendance.

The Association supports regulations requiring children starting kindergarten to have reached age five at the beginning of a kindergarten program.

The Association advocates the establishment of fully funded early childhood special education programs. These programs and necessary services should be readily accessible for children with disabilities and staffed by certified/licensed teachers, qualified support staff, and therapists. (75, 95)

B-2. Middle School and Junior High Programs

The National Education Association recognizes the academic, personal, and special needs of the early adolescent or middle school learner.

The Association encourages development of a curriculum that establishes realistic academic challenges that foster positive self-esteem.

The Association further encourages the development of guidance and counseling programs that stimulate parental and community involvement, promote health services, and promote preservice and professional development programs for educators. (76, 93)

B-3. High School Diploma/Equivalency

The National Education Association supports the concept of a high school education for all and believes that every student should earn a high school diploma or its equivalent. The Association also believes in the value of academic preparation, school attendance, and social interaction for meeting the requirements of high school graduation.

The Association believes that high school equivalency testing can be misused and have a negative impact on secondary education. The Association recognizes, however, that in some instances the use of high school equivalency tests is acceptable when the best interests of the students are served.

The Association further believes that any state or district plan to use equivalency testing as the basis for qualification for a high school diploma should be developed cooperatively by classroom teachers, administrators, and governing boards. The plan should include provisions for recommendations from the local school faculty.

Recommendations should be based, as a minimum, upon achievement record, ability, and age and should be developmentally appropriate for the student. (76, 95)

B-4. Higher Education

The National Education Association supports higher education as an essential part of the education process. The Association believes that postsecondary education serves an invaluable function for intellectual development, for research and scholarship, for career preparation, and for preparation for life.

The Association supports access to postsecondary programs for all qualified students without regard to age, gender, sexual orientation, race, military registration status, or ability to pay. The Association also believes that postsecondary institutions should not penalize degree-holding students who return to upgrade or develop new skills.

The Association further supports fully funded, guaranteed student loan and grant programs, including fully funded health care insurance. Guaranteed loans should be made available for all students. Criteria for grants should include the total financial situation of the family, other family members currently enrolled in institutions of higher education, and parents' ability to contribute financially.

The Association also believes that clear admission and graduation standards, careful student counseling, tutorial and other support services, the right to complete coursework during or after the quarter/semester missed due to documented extended illness, active participation of students in their own learning, and a thoughtfully articulated curriculum can significantly help increase the number of students successfully completing their degrees.

The Association further believes that all courses must be offered with sufficient frequency and with a sufficient number of sections to enable students to graduate within the time prescribed for each program. (80, 96)

B-5. Class Size

The National Education Association believes that excellence in the classroom can best be attained by small class size, particularly in grades pre-K through 12, which allows for the optimum development of a student's potential. Class size and daily student-teacher contacts must allow for individual attention to each pupil. The Association further believes that excessive class size hinders the teaching and learning process and is a major contributing factor to the disruptive behaviors of students.

The Association urges its affiliates to seek an optimum class size of 15 students in regular programs and a proportionately lower number in programs for students with exceptional needs.

The Association believes that class size maximums must be established, with Association involvement, based on the type of students, subject area content, physical facilities, and other criteria. The Association further believes that local and state affiliates should seek the implementation of a weighted class size formula to reflect the inclusion of exceptional students.

The Association urges its affiliates to encourage state departments of education to collect and report class size data that reflect the class size experienced by most students.

The Association believes that local and state funding agencies should reduce class size during periods of declining enrollment.

The Association urges local and state affiliates to resist efforts to circumvent laws, regulations, and policies that mandate maximum class size and maximum teaching loads. (82, 93)

B-6. Diversity

The National Education Association believes that our diverse society enriches all individuals. Similarities and differences among races, ethnicity, color, national origin, language, geographic location, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, size, and marital, parental, or economic status form the fabric of our society.

The Association also believes that education should increase tolerance and foster an appreciation of the various qualities that pertain to people as individuals or members of a group.

The Association further believes in the importance of observances, programs, and curricula that accurately portray and recognize the roles, contributions, cultures, and history of these diverse groups and individuals. (95, 96)

B-7. Racism, Sexism, and Sexual Orientation Discrimination

The National Education Association believes in the equality of all individuals. Discrimination and stereotyping based on such factors as race, gender, immigration status, physical disabilities, ethnicity, and sexual orientation must be eliminated.

The Association also believes that plans, activities, and programs for education employees, students, parents, and the community should be developed to identify and eliminate discrimination and stereotyping in all educational settings. Such plans, activities, and programs must—

a. Increase acceptance of and sensitivity to individuals and groups in a diverse society composed of such groups as American Indians/Alaska Natives, Asians and Pacific Islanders, Blacks, Hispanics, women, gays and lesbians, and people with disabilities

b. Eliminate discrimination and stereotyping in the curriculum, textbooks, resource and instructional materials, activities, etc.

c. Foster the use of nondiscriminatory, nonracist, nonsexist and nonstereotypical language, resources, practices, and activities

d. Eliminate institutional discrimination

e. Integrate an accurate portrayal of the roles and contributions of all groups throughout history across the curriculum

f. Identify how prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination have limited the roles and contributions of individuals and groups

g. Eliminate subtle practices that favor the education of one student over another on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, physical disabilities, or sexual orientation.

The Association encourages its affiliates to develop and implement training programs on these matters. (96)

B-8. American Indian/Alaska Native Education

The National Education Association recognizes that the complex and diverse needs of American Indian/Alaska Native children require the direct involvement of parents, Native educators, tribal leaders, and other Native groups in developing programs that preserve the rich heritage of their cultures.

The Association believes that funding for American Indian/Alaska Native education must provide for improvements. The Association supports the movement toward self-determination by American Indians/Alaska Natives provided that such programs are voluntary. Any termination of federal support as either a direct or an indirect result of efforts to extend self-determination is opposed.

The Association believes in efforts that provide for—

a. Involvement and control of the education of American Indian/Alaska Native students by their parents, communities, and educators

b. Opportunities for higher education for all American Indian/Alaska Native students through direct governmental assistance in graduate and undergraduate programs

c. Involvement of American Indians/Alaska Natives in lobbying efforts for federal programs

d. Protection and maintenance of the integrity of American Indian/Alaska Native families and their tribal cultures so that, if a child has to be removed from his or her home, placement should be determined by the child's tribe

e. Recognition of American Indian/Alaska Native educators as role models

f. Involvement of American Indians/Alaska Natives in teacher training programs dealing with cultural pluralism and Native values

g. American Indian/Alaska Native involvement in developing multicultural learning centers at higher education institutions

h. English proficiency programs that are designed to meet the language needs of American Indian/Alaska Native students

i. Instruction in treaty rights and traditional hunting, fishing, and gathering practices by American Indians/Alaska Natives

j. Assistance to local and state associations in meeting the educational needs of American Indian/Alaska Native students

k. Coordination with American Indian/Alaska Native organizations and concerned agencies that promote the values, heritage, language, culture, and history of the American Indian/Alaska Native people

l. Dissemination of information and programs that include the values, heritage, language, culture, and history of American Indians/Alaska Natives

m. Control of Native lands by American Indians/Alaska Natives. (76, 96)

B-9. Hispanic Education

The National Education Association recognizes that the complex and diverse needs of Hispanic children require the direct involvement of Hispanic educators, parents, and community leaders in developing programs that meet the cultural, language, and learning characteristics of these children.

The Association believes in efforts that provide for —

a. Programs establishing appropriate educational opportunities for Hispanic students

b. Grants and scholarships for higher education that will facilitate the recruitment, entry, and retention of Hispanics

c. Recognition of Hispanic educators as role models

d. Hiring and promotion of Hispanic educators at all levels of the education profession

e. The recruitment, training, and employment of bilingual teachers, counselors, and other professional and support staff to meet the needs of Hispanic students

f. English proficiency programs that are designed to meet the

language needs of Hispanic students

g. Dissemination of information and programs that include the values, heritage, language, culture, and history of Hispanics

The responsibility for developing and implementing programs for Hispanic children should be realized by state and local agencies, regardless of the availability of federal funds. (72, 96)

B-10. Asian and Pacific Islander Education

The National Education Association recognizes that the complex and diverse needs of Asian and Pacific Islander children require the development of programs that preserve the rich heritage of their cultures.

The Association also believes in efforts that provide for the —

a. Preservice and continuing education of teachers

b. Development of curriculum and instructional materials and programs, including English proficiency programs that are designed to meet the language needs of Asian and Pacific Islander students

c. Education of Asian and Pacific Islander adult refugees

d. Dissemination of programs and information

e. Recognition of Asian and Pacific Islander educators as role models.

The Association encourages opportunities to preserve, promote, and perpetuate Asian and Pacific Islander heritage and culture. (79, 96)

B-11. Black American Education

The National Education Association recognizes that the complex and diverse needs of Black American children require the direct involvement of Black American educators, parents, community leaders, and groups to assure the development of adequate and equal educational programs.

The Association believes that the infusion of Black studies and/or Afrocentric curricula into the instructional program acknowledges the contributions of African Americans to history and Africa as an integral part of world history. Further, the Association believes that these curricula must show a correlation among social, historical, political, and economic developments and events regarding Africa, African Americans, Europeans, and their descendants worldwide.

The Association also believes in efforts that provide for —

a. The preservation of Black heritage and culture

b. Funding of scholarships to facilitate the entry of Black students into the teaching profession

c. Recognition of Black educators as role models

d. Recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion of Black educators, especially Black males at all levels of the education profession

e. Involvement of Black educators in developing educational materials used in classroom instruction

f. English proficiency programs in the regular instructional process for those Black students experiencing difficulty with standard English

g. Programs that address the alarming dropout rate among Black male students and the disproportionate teen pregnancy rate among Black female students and encourage continued education, thereby increasing their participation in the work force

h. Development of athletic programs that promote educational excellence, not just athletic power

i. Opposition to the resegregation of the public schools through special classes

j. Dissemination of information and programs that include the values, heritage, language, culture, and history of the Black American. (81, 96)

B-12. Discriminatory Academic Tracking

The National Education Association believes that the use of discriminatory academic tracking based on socioeconomic status, race, or gender must be eliminated in all public school settings. The Association urges its affiliates to oppose these practices. (88, 93)

B-13. Equal Opportunities Through Mathematics and Science Education

The National Education Association believes that mathematics education and science education are means of helping women and minorities enjoy equal opportunities and equitable treatment for full employment and full participation in our society.

The Association supports the development and maintenance of gender-free and culturally unbiased mathematics and science programs that meet the needs of women and ethnic groups. The Association further encourages the recruitment of females and minorities to enroll in mathematics and science courses, to participate actively in those courses, and to become professionals in those fields. (92, 94)

B-14. Left-Handed Students

The National Education Association believes in meeting the needs of all students in the public schools, including left-handed students. Toward this end, the Association and its affiliates urge appropriate governing agencies to provide desks, scissors, and all other materials and instruments necessary for left-handed students to achieve on an equal basis with right-handed students.

The Association strongly recommends preservice preparation and staff development for education employees that present strategies for handwriting instruction of left-handed students. Such training should also address sensitizing instructional staff to the needs and problems of left-handed students. (79, 95)

B-15. Education of Migrants

The National Education Association believes that migrant workers and their children are entitled to educational opportunities that address their diverse and unique educational needs.

The Association advocates the implementation of bilingual/bicultural and remedial instructional programs that address the individual instructional needs of migrant students in the United States, regardless of the availability of federal and state funds to support such programs. (75, 96)

B-16. Equity for Incarcerated Persons

The National Education Association believes that incarcerated persons, regardless of gender, are entitled to equal access to educational, recreational, and rehabilitative programs within all correctional systems. (90)

B-17. Alternative Programs for At-Risk and/or Special Needs Students

The National Education Association recognizes that there must be increased development and maintenance of alternative programs to meet the needs of at-risk and/or special needs students, prekindergarten through adult. The Association recommends early and appropriate identification and placement of these students. Teachers and administrators should receive necessary training in diagnostic processes and alternative methods of teaching and learning. Appropriate training should be provided to educational support staff also.

Programs should emphasize a broad range of activities for responding to students' differing behavioral patterns, interests, needs, and learning styles. These programs must be evaluated on stated objectives. Teachers in these programs must have a major role in designing the objectives and evaluations and working with appropriate school and community personnel to execute these objectives and evaluations.

The Association urges its affiliates to seek adequate compensation, planning time, materials, and facilities for teachers and counselors in these programs.

The Association supports the efforts of its affiliates to negotiate and legislate for the training of teachers seeking additional certification and hiring of an increased number of teachers with education in special areas.

The Association encourages its state affiliates to seek legislation that would require any person offering services to remediate, correct, or ameliorate reading, speech, language, behavioral, emotional, or learning disabilities, or related problems to be licensed under regulations of each state's department of public instruction or other appropriate agency. (77, 95)

B-18. Gifted, Talented, and Creative Students

The National Education Association believes there must be increased development of fully funded educational programs for gifted, talented, and creative students.

The Association further believes that educators need training in selecting reliable methods of identifying and teaching these students. Such identification shall not discriminate on any basis other than the exceptionality being identified. The Association also believes that training programs in gifted and talented education must be provided for all appropriate school employees to ensure support for such programs.

The Association urges local and state affiliates to encourage the development and implementation of such programs and methods to ensure that these special need areas are met. (80, 94)

B-19. Educational Programs for Limited English Proficiency Students

The National Education Association believes that limited English proficiency (LEP) students must have available to them programs

that address their unique needs and that are committed to providing equal opportunity to all students, regardless of their primary language.

The Association urges that the programs for LEP students emphasize proficiency (the ability to speak, read, write, and reason in English) as a primary goal to enable these students to reach their full potential in an English-speaking society. At the same time, meaningful instruction should be provided in all other curriculum areas.

The Association urges that those students whose primary language is other than English be placed in bilingual education programs to receive instruction in their native language from qualified teachers until such time as English proficiency is achieved. If no bilingual programs are available, these students should be taught in English-as-a-second-language (ESL) programs designed to meet their specific needs. Under no circumstances should students with limited English proficiency be enrolled in special education classes solely because of linguistic differences.

The Association believes that model bilingual education programs, in which language minority students demonstrate an increase in English language acquisition and academic achievement throughout the grade levels, should be promoted and supported at the federal, state, and local levels. Further, the Association advocates full funding of all instructional materials, resources, and programs for students with limited English proficiency, as well as the training of education personnel to work with these students. The school district or other appropriate agency should provide released time for the training of teachers who instruct limited English proficient students.

Educators, through a bargaining or other bilateral decision-making process, must be fully involved in the development and implementation of programs serving these students, including the assignment of teachers and the terms and conditions of their employment. Teachers should be compensated at the teacher's hourly rate of pay for any additional time spent in training. They should also be reimbursed for the cost of tuition, textbooks, and travel incurred in such training.

The Association values bilingual and multilingual competence and supports programs that assist individuals in attaining and maintaining proficiency in their native language before and after they acquire proficiency in English. (81, 95)

B-20. Education for All Students with Disabilities

The National Education Association supports a free, appropriate public education for all students with disabilities in a least restrictive environment, which is determined by maximum teacher and parent involvement. There must be a full continuum of placement options and services/delivery models available to students with disabilities. In order to implement federal special education legislation effectively, the Association recognizes that:

a. The educational environment, using appropriate instructional materials, support services, and pupil personnel services, must match the learning needs of both students with and students without disabilities.

b. Student placement must be based on individual needs rather than on available space, funding, or local philosophy of a school district, must be examined on a regular basis to ensure appropriateness, and should not be made disproportionately by ethnicity or gender. Necessary building/staff modifications must be provided to facilitate such placement.

c. Regular and special education classroom teachers must have a major role in determining an individual education program (IEP) and the appropriateness of educational methods, materials, professional development, and supportive services and must receive a copy of the IEP.

d. Regular and special education teachers, pupil personnel staff, administrators, educational support personnel, and parents must share in planning and implementing the IEP. Prior to implementation, all necessary educational materials, professional development, and supportive services must be provided.

e. Students with physical disabilities and/or medical needs requiring nursing procedures must have their medical needs met by certified/professional school nurses.

f. All impacted staff members must have an appeal procedure regarding the implementation of the IEP, especially in terms of student placement. The procedure must include the right to have the dissenting opinion recorded and attached to the IEP.

g. Suspension and expulsion policies and practices used by local education agencies must be applied consistently to both students with and students without disabilities where misconduct is shown to be unrelated to either the disabling condition or to improper placement.

h. A plan recognizing individual differences must be used in a systematic evaluation and reporting of program development.

i. Limitations must be made in class size, using methods such as weighted formulas, modified scheduling, and/or curriculum design to accommodate the demands of each IEP.

j. All teachers who serve students with disabilities must have scheduled access to resource personnel, instructional assistants, paraprofessionals, co-teachers, and special education teachers.

k. The student's IEP should not be used as criteria for the evaluation of education employees.

l. Communications must be maintained among all involved parties.

m. Staff must not be reduced.

n. All staff must be adequately prepared for their roles through appropriate licensing and ongoing professional development programs.

o. Incentives for participation in professional development activities should, as mandated by law, be made available for education employees.

p. Education employees, as mandated by law, must be appointed to local and state advisory bodies on special education.

q. Education employees must be allowed to take part in the U.S. Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services on-site visits to states. Education employees should be invited to these meetings.

r. Local associations and education employees must be recruited, trained, and involved in monitoring school system compliance with federal special education legislation.

s. Adequate released time or funded additional time must be made available so that teachers can carry out the increased demands placed upon them by federal special education legislation.

t. Collective bargaining and other means should be used to minimize the potentially severe impact on staff that results from the implementation of special education legislation.

u. Benefits for staff working with students with disabilities must be negotiated through collective bargaining agreements and must be honored.

v. Full funding must be provided by local, state, and federal governments. (78, 95)

B-21. Adolescent Pregnancy and Parenting

The National Education Association believes that with the increased number of adolescent pregnancies and adolescent parents, special efforts must be made by school districts to meet the needs of these students to live productive lives in our society.

The Association recommends that special programs for adolescents be implemented to include —

a. Development of positive self-esteem and self-concept

b. Flexible scheduling and attendance policies to assist pregnant adolescents and adolescent parents in completing their education

c. Adequate guidance in continuing education and productive employment

d. Promotion of sound health principles regarding nutrition, substance abuse, exercise, family planning, and parenting skills

e. Establishment of on-site child care services.

The Association further believes that adolescent parents should not be discriminated against or denied equal educational opportunities. (87, 95)

B-22. Homebound Instruction

The National Education Association believes that the diverse educational needs of all students must be met. Homebound students must have programs developed and maintained by state or local education entities. These programs must be implemented, documented, and monitored by licensed education professionals. The curriculum must be approved by the state education agency and be comparable to the classroom instruction. Such approved courses must be transferable as graduation requirements for the participants. (88)

B-23. Correspondence Programs

The National Education Association believes that state and local school correspondence programs that are funded by state or local school districts must be implemented by licensed educators. These alternative programs must use a curriculum approved by the state education agency. A student's progress must be documented and monitored by a licensed educator. Such approved courses must be transferable as graduation requirements for the participant. (88, 93)

B-24. Youth and Adult Training Programs

The National Education Association believes that the public schools should be involved as an equal partner with government, labor, business, agriculture, and community-based groups in youth and adult employment and training programs. The Association further believes that these programs should supplement, and not supplant, the vocational programs provided in the public schools.

The Association further believes that the use of funds for and duration of these programs should be flexible in order to accommodate the differing learning needs of students. The amount of funding

should be predictable in order to facilitate year-to-year planning. These programs should provide opportunities for women, persons with disabilities, and ethnic minorities in nontraditional occupations. (80, 91)

B-25. Education Through Service Learning and Community Service

The National Education Association believes that learning through voluntary community service should be encouraged as an integral part of a student's education. Participation in community service and service learning programs should not be required for high school graduation but could be used for elective credit.

Education employees who supervise students involved in these programs should be given appropriate compensation, planning time, program support, recognition, and time to evaluate the service and learning goals.

The Association also believes that school districts should work with community groups to provide students with the opportunity to participate in such programs. (90, 96)

B-26. Multicultural Education

The National Education Association believes that multiculturalism is the process of valuing differences and incorporating the values identified into behavior for the goal of achieving the common good. The Association further believes that multicultural education is a way of helping students perceive the cultural diversity of U.S. citizenry so that they may develop pride in their own cultural legacy and awaken to the ideals embodied in the cultures of their neighbors.

The Association further believes that the goal of multicultural education is the recognition of individual and group differences and similarities in order to reduce racism, ethnic prejudices, and discrimination and to develop self-esteem as well as respect for others.

The Association believes that multicultural education encompasses at least three things: an idea or concept, an educational reform movement, and a process. As an idea or concept, multicultural education assumes that all students can learn. As an educational reform movement, multicultural education seeks to develop an entire school environment that is inclusive of cultural considerations (e.g., curriculum, instructional materials, learning and testing, respect for cultural differences, etc.). As a process, the development of a multicultural school environment is ever evolving and ongoing.

The Association urges its affiliates to develop comprehensive educator training programs for multicultural education and to work to secure legislation that would provide adequate funding for effective implementation of such programs. (81, 95)

B-27. Global Education

The National Education Association believes that global education increases respect for and awareness of the earth and its people. Global education imparts information about cultures and an appreciation of our interdependency in sharing the world's resources to meet mutual human needs.

The Association further believes that curriculum and instruction about regional and international conflicts must present a balanced view, include historical context, and demonstrate relevancy and sensitivity to all people. The achievement of this goal requires the mastery of global communication and development of an appreciation of the common humanity shared by all peoples.

The Association believes that the goal of appreciation of and harmony with our global neighbors depends on a national commitment to strengthening the capability of the educational system to teach American children about the world. The Association believes that this goal can be achieved through positive multicultural language and global education programs that are funded and include teacher involvement and training. (95)

B-28. Foreign Language Education

The National Education Association believes that foreign language instruction is a vital part of the total educational process. Students must be offered the opportunity to learn other languages early in their educational experience.

The Association supports the maintenance of current programs and the further encouragement and development of foreign language instruction and international studies at all educational levels.

The Association recognizes the need for teacher training programs for foreign language teachers and supports teacher and student exchange programs. (81, 95)

B-29. Career Education

The National Education Association believes that a goal of public education is to provide all individuals, preschool through adulthood, opportunities to become effective, productive citizens. To achieve this goal, the career education concept must be interwoven into the total educational system and needs to include programs in gender-free career awareness and exploration to aid students in career course selection.

The Association believes that educational programs for all students should be developed that will enhance self-esteem, will assure equal opportunity for career development, and will offer exploratory experiences in a variety of careers, including small business management and self-employment. The Association and its affiliates should be encouraged to provide professional development experiences and released time for teachers for curriculum development in this area and should cooperate with industry and agencies in full support of career education programs. (76, 92)

B-30. Vocational Education

The National Education Association believes that preparation of students for vocations and productive jobs should be a responsibility of secondary and higher education. Educational programs that assure equal opportunity for occupational development and encourage students to consider nontraditional vocations should be developed for all students at all levels. A continuing comprehensive program for training, retraining, advancement, and promotion should be provided for students who have completed minimal state attendance requirements.

The Association supports vocational and technical education as a major component of education and advocates that every student have the opportunity to enroll in such classes without restrictions. To be effective, vocational and technical education should be preceded by career awareness and exploration programs. These exploratory courses should be coordinated with traditionally academic courses and industrial and practical arts education courses. These academic programs and industrial programs should be combined, when appropriate, with cooperative efforts on the part of educators and industrial and business leaders to provide school-to-work experiences for students.

The Association believes that adequate resources must be provided to maintain, enhance, and expand quality vocational education programs, prepare students for a high-technology environment, and purchase up-to-date equipment. The Association further believes that the involvement of education employees, private sector employment and training program personnel, and the business community is essential to the development of vocational education programs. (76, 96)

B-31. Fine Arts Education

The National Education Association believes that artistic expression is basic to an individual's intellectual, aesthetic, and emotional development. The Association further believes that fine arts transcend cultural barriers, foster multicultural understanding, and enhance critical thinking skills. The Association therefore believes that every elementary and secondary school curriculum must include a balanced, comprehensive, and sequential program of fine arts instruction for all students taught by a licensed specialist in a facility or room designed and equipped for that purpose. Resources must be provided to maintain and upgrade materials and provide for emerging technologies.

The Association urges its state affiliates to become involved in the promotion, expansion, and implementation of an academic fine arts program in the curriculum. (80, 96)

B-32. Physical Education

The National Education Association believes that physical activity and exercise are essential for good health and must be encouraged during the developmental years of students. The Association further believes that a comprehensive program of physical education should be provided daily in grades pre-K through 12 in or on facilities designed for that purpose.

The Association believes that the following concepts should be included —

a. Curriculum emphasis should cover physical fitness; skills of sports, games, dance and basic movement; and related concepts and knowledge.

b. Student assessments should include physical fitness testing at least twice a year as a culmination of preparatory activities.

c. Every student should have posture checks and other health screenings with follow-up activities provided.

d. Programs should include appropriate provisions for the special needs of students with low fitness, physical disabilities, or learning disabilities.

e. Teachers of physical education should have appropriate professional preparation in physical education as well as periodic professional growth training.

The Association further believes that physical education programs should be developmental, sequential, cooperative in nature, and culturally sensitive. (91, 93)

B-33. Family Life Education

The National Education Association recognizes the myriad family structures of our society and the impact of these family structures and other close personal relationships on the quality of individual lives and upon society. The Association further recognizes the importance of education in the maintenance and promotion of stable, functional, healthy families and the emotional, physical, and mental health of people within these families.

The Association believes that programs should be established for both students and parents and supported at all educational levels to promote —

a. The development of self-esteem and positive self-concept in individuals of all ages in various family roles

b. Learning and practicing positive interpersonal communication skills and conflict resolution

c. Education in human growth and development

d. Positive parenting techniques that include strategies to deal effectively with violent behavior

e. An understanding of societal issues and problems related to children, spouses, parents, older generation family members, and other family members.

The Association believes that education in these areas must be presented as part of an anti- biased, culturally-sensitive program. (94, 96)

B-34. Sex Education

The National Education Association believes that the developing child's sexuality is continually and inevitably influenced by daily contacts, including experiences in the school environment. The Association recognizes that sensitive sex education can be a positive force in promoting physical, mental, emotional, and social health and that the public school must assume an increasingly important role in providing the instruction. Teachers and health professionals must be qualified to teach in this area and must be legally protected from censorship and lawsuits.

The Association urges that formal sex education should include parent orientation and be planned and implemented with careful attention to developmental needs, appropriateness to community settings and values, and respect for individual differences.

The Association urges its affiliates and members to support appropriately established sex education programs, including information on sexual abstinence, birth control and family planning, diversity of culture, diversity of sexual orientation, parenting skills, prenatal care, sexually transmitted diseases, incest, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, the effects of substance abuse during pregnancy, and problems associated with and resulting from preteen and teenage pregnancies.

To facilitate the realization of human potential, it is the right of every individual to live in an environment of freely available information, knowledge, and wisdom about sexuality. (69, 93)

B-35. AIDS Education

The National Education Association recommends that educational institutions establish comprehensive acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) education programs as an integral part of the school curriculum. AIDS education must include education about all means of transmission, including sex and intravenous (IV) drug use. Information on prevention options must include abstinence and medically accepted protective devices. Instruction in decision-making skills to assist students in correlating health information and personal behavior is essential.

The Association believes that proper implementation of these programs requires education employee training and input. The Association further believes that these programs should be presented by properly licensed/trained personnel and should be planned with the input of parents and other community representatives. (87, 93)

B-36. Lifesaving Techniques

The National Education Association believes that education employees and students should be trained in basic emergency lifesaving techniques. Such training should be included in both school curriculum and staff development. (82, 96)

B-37. Environmental Education

The National Education Association believes that the nation's priorities must include the protection of our environment. The Association urges the establishment and maintenance of Federal Wilderness Areas, Recreational Areas, Refuge Areas, and designated local green areas. The Association further urges the development and improvement of educational programs that will —

a. Promote the concept of the interdependence of humanity and nature

b. Develop an awareness of the effects of past, present, and future population growth patterns on world civilization, human survival, and the environment

c. Promote an understanding of the necessity to protect endangered, threatened, and rare species

d. Promote an understanding of the necessity to protect the earth's finite resources

e. Promote the concept of pollution reduction

f. Promote the use of reusable and recyclable products and discourage the use of disposable products

g. Promote the use of disposal methods that do not contaminate the environment

h. Promote the recognition of and participation in Earth Day activities

i. Promote the understanding of the value of the world's forests, waters, wetlands, deserts, and grasslands.

The Association urges its affiliates to support environmental programs in school systems and educational institutions. (73, 96)

B-38. Arbor Day Education

The National Education Association believes that Arbor Day should be appropriately observed each year in every state. The Association urges its state and local affiliates to encourage their governors and mayors to declare the appropriate day each year as Arbor Day. Appropriate activities such as essay contests and tree plantings should be a part of this observation in each school. (88, 94)

B-39. Atmospheric Pollution

The National Education Association believes that atmospheric changes caused by human activities pose a significant environmental threat.

The Association urges the development of educational programs that explore the causes and effects of atmospheric problems such as global warming, ozone depletion, and acid precipitation and deposition, and possible solutions to such problems. (89, 95)

B-40. Energy Education

The National Education Association believes that educational programs should increase understanding of energy, alternative energy sources, and energy conservation.

The Association urges its affiliates to support a National Energy Education Day and to encourage energy education programs at all levels. (85, 96)

B-41. Democracy and Citizenship Education

The National Education Association believes that democratic ideals should be practiced as part of the total education process. The Association further believes that the following concepts should be an integral part of the curriculum within public schools and other educational institutions:

a. The dignity and worth of the individual
b. Due process of law
c. Rule of the majority tempered by respect for minority rights
d. Individual responsibility
e. Equal justice under the law
f. Civil liberties as guarantors of individual rights
g. One-person — one-vote
h. Active citizen participation in all aspects of public affairs.

The Association encourages teachers, lawyers, court personnel, and others to work together to develop appropriate materials, including information about the justice system and constitutional issues, in order to teach students to be responsible citizens. (84, 96)

B-42. Labor Movement Education

The National Education Association believes that the struggles of working men and women to establish unions and the influence of the labor movement on the growth of the United States should be an integral part of the curriculum in our schools.

The Association urges teachers, curriculum committees, and authors to include material that accurately presents the important contributions to our country's history and growth that have been provided by the unions involved in the labor movement and the individuals who led that movement. (88, 96)

B-43. Metric System

The National Education Association believes in the adoption of the International System of Units (SI metric system). The Association advocates that the SI system be taught at all educational levels. (69, 96)

B-44. Accurate United States Maps

The National Education Association believes that all visual representations using maps of the United States should depict all fifty states and Puerto Rico in their correct geographic location and relative size. (95)

B-45. Driver Education

The National Education Association believes that fully funded classroom and behind-the-wheel driver education courses taught by a certified teacher should be part of the basic education of all students.

The Association urges its affiliates to support legislation that requires these courses in the curriculum. (80, 86)

B-46. Education on Peace and the Dangers of Nuclear Proliferation

The National Education Association believes that instructional materials on the establishment of peace and the understanding of nuclear proliferation need to be developed. The Association urges its affiliates to work with other organizations to develop age-appropriate materials for all levels. These materials should include activities dealing with peaceful resolution of conflict as well as show the effects of nuclear weaponry and demonstrate strategies for disarmament with appropriate methods to be used to influence national policy to achieve peace.

The Association believes that the United States and the world need to take a stand for peace and international understanding. The development of educational programs is a first step in that direction. (82, 95)

B-47. Genocide

The National Education Association deplores any act of genocide, defined as "the deliberate and systematic eradication of a racial, political, cultural, or religious group." Acts of genocide must be acknowledged and taught so as to prevent their occurrence and preclude their recurrence. Curricula should include the historical context of all known acts of genocide in order to provide insight into how such inhumanity develops. (93, 96)

B-48. The Holocaust

The National Education Association believes that a way to prevent events that have caused great human misery, such as the Holocaust, is to teach all students about the Holocaust not only as an historical event but also as a means of providing insight into how inhumanity of this magnitude develops. The Holocaust must be taught so that never again can doubt of its occurrence be raised and never again can like action occur. (81, 93)

B-49. Homework

The National Education Association supports the assignment of homework as one means of reinforcing and furthering classroom instruction and learning.

The Association believes that the type and the amount of homework assigned should be determined by the classroom teacher and be appropriate to a student's developmental level. (85, 90)

B-50. Discipline

The National Education Association believes that a safe and orderly environment, in which students are treated with dignity, will provide them with a positive learning experience. Effective disciplinary procedures enhance high expectations and quality instruction, thereby promoting self control and responsible behavior in students while ensuring the right of all students to due process and an orderly learning environment.

The Association promotes the study, development, and funding of a variety of effective discipline procedures. The Association believes that its local affiliates, in conjunction with other stakeholders, should develop guidelines for effective disciplinary techniques. Further, the Association believes that governing boards, in conjunction with local affiliates, parents/guardians, students, staff, and community members, should develop policies and standards that provide the necessary administrative support to education employees for the maintenance of a positive, safe school environment.

The Association condemns the misuse of discipline as a means of excluding students from the school setting until other methods of behavioral intervention have been exhausted. This does not preclude the removal of the offender from the school setting to protect other students and education employees. The Association also believes that disruptive students should not be placed in vocational, technical, unified arts, or special education classes solely for the purpose of solving disciplinary problems. The Association further believes that corporal punishment should not be used as a means of disciplining students. (75, 96)

B-51. Conflict Resolution Education

The National Education Association believes that many television programs, movies, computer games, lyrics, musical performances, and other cultural influences condition children and youth to accept interpersonal and societal violence as a means of resolving conflicts.

The Association further believes that such conditioning has a negative impact on the attitudes and behavior of many young people and offers them a socially unacceptable response to conflicts.

The Association supports the use of proven conflict-resolution strategies, instructional materials, and activities in the curriculum, for classroom procedures, on the playground, and at school-sponsored extracurricular activities to encourage nonviolent resolution of interpersonal and societal conflicts.

The Association encourages the development of programs to train education employees in methods of nonviolent conflict resolution. In addition, the Association recommends the use of conflict resolution processes to resolve disputes and disagreements between and among all education employees so that they can model these processes. (86, 95)

B-52. Standardized Testing of Students

The National Education Association opposes standardized testing that is mandated by local, state, or national authority. The Association also opposes the use of these tests to compare one student, staff member, school, or district with another, especially when the threat of loss of compensation, prestige, control, or resources is attached.

The Association urges its affiliates to work to eliminate the misuse of standardized tests and high-stakes testing wherever they currently exist. Instead, affiliates should advocate the design and use of a variety of developmentally appropriate assessment techniques that are bias-free, reliable, and valid. These assessment measures must be viewed within the context of a continuum of education strategies for the individual student. Such assessments are best developed on site as an integral part of an instruction plan. (78, 95)

B-53. Student Assessment Programs in Higher Education

The National Education Association believes that student assessment programs in higher education, properly designed and administered, can be crucial tools for diagnosing student and institutional needs, improving instruction and counseling services, and designing long-range plans. The Association believes that student assessment programs in higher education should —

a. Be designed institutionally rather than by the state

b. Be planned, designed, implemented, and evaluated by faculty

c. Be implemented in accordance with collective bargaining contracts where such contracts exist

d. Be sufficiently flexible to accommodate the cultural, economic, and linguistic diversity among students

e. Provide tests appropriate for students with identified learning disabilities

f. Provide faculty with information to improve individual student learning styles and aptitude.

The Association supports student assessment programs in higher education only if —

a. They are accompanied by adequate funding for remedial programs and advisement

b. Remedial programs are designed and provided to meet the deficiencies identified through assessment

c. Advisement is designed and provided to link the remediation of individual students to the completion of their degree, certificates, or other appropriate courses of study.

The Association strongly opposes —

a. The use of student assessment programs to deny access to, or exclude students from, educational opportunities

b. The use of any single test to deny access to regular credit classes

c. The use of student assessment programs for the purpose of evaluating faculty, academic programs, or institutions. (95)

B-54. School Libraries/Media Programs

The National Education Association believes every student must have a comprehensive library/media program within his or her educational setting. This program should include printed and nonprinted resource materials, instruction in library research and information skills, necessary technology, certificated librarians/media specialists, and educational support personnel. (80, 92)

B-55. Information Literacy

The National Education Association believes that equity must be assured as public education works to meet the critical need to prepare all students to become information-literate adults and responsible citizens.

The Association encourages federal funding specific to library/media programs, increased funding from state and local government sources, and public/private partnership funding to stimulate and support the efficient use of existing and emerging technologies and to provide for equity and freedom of access to information unimpeded by geographic, economic, social, or cultural constraints. (92, 94)

B-56. Media

The National Education Association recognizes the fact that the media have an effect on the education of the public. Therefore, the Association believes that the media have an obligation to provide full, constructive, balanced, and accurate presentations. Visual media, including the Association's, should include closed captioning for the hearing impaired. The Association supports the media's right to protect information and sources of information from mandated disclosures and search and seizure. (69, 94)

B-57. Technology in the Educational Process

The National Education Association recognizes the advancement and application of instructional technology and high-technology devices and materials that provide new opportunities for developing skills, furthering research, and expanding knowledge in our society. Technology increases the opportunity to reduce educational inequities within and among schools and school districts. The Association believes that local associations should support efforts to use technology to improve the quality of instruction in local schools, to enhance the working conditions of their members, and to protect members' rights. The Association further believes that technology should be used to enhance the roles and instructional opportunities of education employees.

The Association encourages federal funding of school technology programs, with increased funding from state and local government sources and public/private partnership funding to stimulate and support the proper use of emerging techpologies. Maintenance, technical support, training, evaluation, and staffing, as well as equipment purchases, must also be fully funded.

The Association believes that —

a. Education employees should have access to necessary technology for managing and advancing instruction. Such technology must be compatible with and on at least the same level as technology in general use outside education. Further, they should be provided encouragement, time, and resources to experiment with and to research applications of technology in order to integrate technology into the curriculum.

b. Education employees, including representatives of the local association, must be involved in all aspects of technology utilization, including planning, materials selection, implementation, and evaluation. Individuals who teach classes over interactive telecommunication networks should be given sufficient time to prepare for their classes. Additional preparation time should be granted to teachers using technology to enrich their regular programs. Further, classroom teachers and library/media specialists must have collaborative planning time to develop programs.

c. Training should be provided for education employees in the use of technologies and applications, the development of effective materials, and appropriate instructional strategies.

d. Teacher preparation in instructional technology must begin in college and university programs and extend through continuing opportunities for professional development.

e. Students must become aware of the social and economic impact of technology and must be provided with access to and instruction in the use of such technology. Further, technological education programs must provide equity in training, funding, and participation for all students.

f. All students and education employees should have an understanding of copyright law and the responsible use of technological materials.

g. Effective use of technology, including distance learning, requires a licensed teacher in every classroom. Instructional technology should be used to support instruction, but no reduction of positions, hours, or compensation should occur as a direct or indirect result of any technological programs.

h. The evaluation of education employees in any technological program should be conducted openly and meet the requirements of the local collective bargaining agreement or evaluation policy. (81, 96)

B-58. Telecommunications Technology

The National Education Association believes that every classroom and school library/media center should have equal access to the resources necessary to make full use of telecommunications, including the National Information Infrastructure (NII). Students, education employees, and educational institutions should be provided a toll-free seamless connection to all telecommunications networks with access to the education community and the information resources that lie outside in the broader community. Access to broadband networks capable of carrying video, audio, and data is needed to permit groups of students, educators, and other individuals to collaborate on joint projects in any medium they choose.

The Association supports the development of a user-friendly infrastructure which can accommodate a decentralized approach to program and product development so that the interaction among educators, students, researchers, and those outside the educational community can occur. The infrastructure should be operated under voluntary standards that promote interoperability and that support user collaboration. Adequate measures to protect the security of resources on the network should be put in place. Further, comprehensive directories of information resources and navigation systems for locating these resources should be developed and maintained.

The Association believes that education employees are essential to the success of telecommunications projects and their perspective, insights, support, and commitment are vital for successful implementation. The impact of telecommunications and distance learning on education employees should be subject to local collective bargaining agreements.

The Association believes telecommunications can enhance learning opportunities for students, reduce educational inequities within and among educational institutions, and serve as an effective tool for staff development. Telecommunications should be used to support the development of critical thinking and collaboration skills. (93, 95)

B-59. Communication Between the Hearing and the Hearing Impaired

The National Education Association believes that the lack of communications between the hearing and the hearing impaired has detracted from the potential of a broadly distributed group to contribute fully to our total society.

The Association recommends that instruction be given to hearing students that will help them understand the unique needs of all hearing-impaired students and will help hearing students communicate with hearing-impaired students.

The Association further believes that the American Sign Language (ASL) should be offered as a foreign language elective credit at both high school and college levels. (74, 96)

B-60. Credit-Hour Evaluation

The National Education Association believes that the different methods of assigning credit hours as used by the nation's colleges and universities often cause difficulties in the evaluation of transcripts. The Association therefore urges the nation's colleges and universities to develop, in cooperation with the Association, a uniform formula to evaluate credit hours. (77, 86)

B-61. Transfer of Student Records

The National Education Association believes that the current mobility of the American society dictates the need to expedite confidential informational exchanges between schools when students transfer.

The Association encourages its local and state affiliates and all boards of education to pursue steps to achieve an effective transfer process that protects the rights of students and facilitates the continuity of their education.

The Association further believes that the school and educators who receive students with known serious behavior problems or violence-related potential shall be immediately informed of the violence potential of those students. (80, 93)

B-62. Classroom Use of Animals

The National Education Association believes that educators at all levels should implement guidelines concerning the humane use of animals in the classroom.

The Association urges that teachers encourage compassion and respect for all living things. (89)

B-63. Home Schooling

The National Education Association believes that home schooling programs cannot provide the student with a comprehensive education experience.

The Association believes that if parental preference home schooling study occurs, students enrolled must meet all state requirements. Instruction should be by persons who are licensed by the appropriate state education licensure agency, and a curriculum approved by the state department of education should be used.

The Association believes that local public school systems should have the authority to determine grade placement and/or credits earned toward graduation for students entering or re-entering the public school setting from a home school setting.

The Association further believes that such home schooling programs should be limited to the children of the immediate family, with all expenses being borne by the parents. (88, 94)

C. PROMOTE THE HEALTH AND WELFARE OF CHILDREN AND/OR STUDENTS

C-1. Health Care for All Children

The National Education Association believes that every child should have direct and confidential access to comprehensive health care.

The Association believes that such health care should be provided by properly licensed physicians and by other properly licensed health professionals.

The Association urges its affiliates to support legislation to provide comprehensive health care to all children. (90, 91)

C-2. Nutrition

The National Education Association believes that proper nutrition is essential to child development and student success. The Association further believes that proper nutrition must be a part of prenatal care and must continue throughout life.

The Association supports programs within the education framework that promote understanding of proper nutrition. In addition, the Association advocates efforts to develop uniform symbols that make clear to consumers which food choices promote good nutrition.

The Association believes school food service programs must be nutritionally sound, appealing, and affordable. The Association also supports nutrition programs that are regulated by uniform standards, readily accessible, and are supported by public funds.

The Association further believes that changes in the way public funds are allocated for school lunch programs must maintain appropriate levels of service as well as support additional funding, given projected increases in population and need. (90, 96)

C-3. Substance Abuse

The National Education Association opposes drug abuse, including alcohol and tobacco dependency.

The Association supports —

a. Standardization of drug laws, including the sale and distribution of drugs

b. Prohibition of the production, sale, and distribution of drug paraphernalia

c. Improvement of drug prevention and rehabilitation programs

d. Mandated drug rehabilitation programs for any violation or conviction, whether civil or criminal, resulting from the possession or use of a controlled substance

e. Research on the genetic and neurological damage done to children through parental substance abuse and the impact on student learning and behavior.

The Association opposes the illegal use of drugs and substances and believes that severe penalties for illegal production, distribution, and sale should be strictly enforced.

The Association supports strict enforcement of the legal drinking age and the laws governing the sale of alcoholic beverages in each state and supports federal legislation to establish a uniform legal drinking age of 21.

The Association supports strict enforcement of laws governing the sale of tobacco products and believes that federal legislation should be established to create a uniform age of 18 for purchase, possession, or use of tobacco products. (72, 96)

C-4. Tobacco Products

The National Education Association believes that educators should play a key role in nationwide efforts to educate young people about the dangers of tobacco use and second-hand smoke.

The Association also believes that all governmental promotion of, subsidies for, and involvement in production and distribution of tobacco products should cease.

The Association further believes that the following changes in the law should occur:

a. All places of public accommodation should be smoke-free.

b. All advertising of tobacco products beyond packaging should be banned.

c. Taxes on tobacco products should be increased. (94)

C-5. Family Stability for Children

The National Education Association believes that it is in the best interest of all children to live in a secure and stable family environment. Every effort should be made to provide a family with the supportive services it needs to allow it to stay together and care for the child in a safe, nonabusive, and nurturing environment.

In the case of custodial and non-custodial parents, the Association recognizes the vital role both parents can play in the development of their children. The Association encourages the judicial system to recognize the crucial role both parents can play in that development when legally appropriate.

If a child's immediate family and/or extended family is unable to care for him or her, the Association believes that the child may need temporary foster care while, at the same time, efforts are made to work with the family toward reunification with the child.

The Association also believes that parents who place children in foster care must be accountable for their efforts to rehabilitate themselves and indicate, through their actions, that they are working toward the return of the child to the home.

The Association further believes that, if it becomes clear that a family is not able to make a home for a child and is unable to resume parenting, efforts should be made for the legal release of the child for adoption. (84, 96)

C-6. Dependent Children of Military Personnel

The National Education Association believes that parents serving in the military should have adequate services provided to ensure that their dependent children are cared for and an uninterrupted education is provided in the event of the parent's/parents' mobilization. (91, 96)

C-7. Child Care

The National Education Association believes that all child care centers should have adequate facilities, proper supervision, appropriate education programs, and qualified, screened, and trained personnel. Child care centers should be examined and monitored on a continuous basis, and additional legislation should be sought as necessary to maintain the highest quality child care.

The Association encourages school districts and educational institutions to establish on-site child care for preschoolers, students, the children of students, and the children of staff members. (84, 95)

C-8. Family/Domestic Violence

The National Education Association believes the cycle of family/domestic violence has a detrimental effect on students' well-being. School districts should provide preventive training and educational programs for education employees, students, and parents/guardians. The Association supports funding and staffing of existing family services and the creation of additional support systems and shelters.

The Association also believes social services and the criminal justice system should continue to intervene actively in the cycle of family/domestic violence. (78, 96)

C-9. Standards for Family/Domestic Crisis Care

The National Education Association supports a full range of assistance from interventions to shelters for families experiencing domestic violence.

The Association advocates:

a. Services that include protection, counseling, and therapy for these children and families

b. Adequate financial support

c. Screening and training of potential foster families and shelter personnel

d. Immediate temporary foster care for children who are being abused, neglected, or exploited

e. Continued training, supervision, and evaluation of foster families and shelter personnel

f. Appropriate ongoing communications of pertinent information between social service agencies and school personnel

g. Mandated counseling for persons committing physical and/or psychological violence. (92, 95)

C-10. Child Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation

The National Education Association believes that all children should be protected from the psychological and physical aspects of child abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

The Association urges its affiliates to —

a. Seek clear legal definitions of what constitutes child abuse, neglect, and exploitation

b. Encourage the development of educator preparation courses and employee awareness programs which stress the identification of, reporting procedures for, legal responsibilities for, and techniques for dealing with abused, neglected, and exploited children

c. Cooperate with community organizations to increase public awareness and understanding of the prevalence, as well as the causes, prevention, and treatment, of child abuse, neglect, and exploitation

d. Encourage the development and use of materials to increase student awareness of child abuse, neglect, and exploitation

e. Require school personnel to report to appropriate authorities instances of suspected child abuse, neglect, and exploitation while providing school personnel with immunity from legal action

f. Encourage development of legislatively funded provisions for

dealing with the abusive child, adult, or institution as well as processes, protective options, and coping provisions for the abused, neglected, and exploited child

g. Encourage enactment of legislation for protection of children from parents/guardians who demonstrate neglect by leaving them unattended/unsupervised

h. Encourage positive action from the marketing and media professions in eliminating exploitation, commercialization, and glamorization of physical, emotional, and sexual child abuse. (74, 93)

C-11. Out-of-Home Placement of Juveniles

The National Education Association believes that when juveniles are removed from the home by the juvenile justice system either for their own protection or for the commission of a status offense and are placed in the custody of group foster homes or other custodial facilities, the rights of both the juvenile and the community must be protected. These facilities must be licensed, be operated by trained and licensed personnel, meet appropriate health and safety codes, and provide counseling and ancillary services for the juvenile, and be nonprofit.

The impact of facilities on the public schools should be taken into account by licensing agencies and zoning authorities.

The Association further believes that the school and educators who receive students with known serious behavior problems or violence-related potential shall be immediately informed of the violence potential of those students. (92, 94)

C-12. Protection of Infants with Disabilities

The National Education Association believes that infants born with mentally and/or physically disabling conditions are entitled to receive reasonable medical care. (85, 93)

C-13. Child Support Payments

The National Education Association supports efforts of parents and local, state, and federal agencies to establish and enforce adequate child support guidelines and to improve the effectiveness of collecting court-designated child support. (83, 93)

C-14. Extremist Groups

The National Education Association condemns the philosophy and practices of extremist groups and their efforts to recruit young people and urges active opposition to all such movements that are inimical to the ideals of the Association. (80, 93)

C-15. Telephone/Telemarketing Programs

The National Education Association believes that children should be protected from exploitive telephone and telemarketing programs and that electronic blocking devices should be available at no cost. (89, 96)

C-16. School Facilities: Design, Construction, and Function

The National Education Association recognizes that all school facilities must be well constructed, energy-efficient, aesthetically pleasing, accessible and adaptable to persons with disabilities, functional, and designed specifically for their intended purposes. The physical environment must allow for a variety of needs, including the number of students, physical characteristics of students, changes in teaching methods, presentation of instruction, and an increased use of school facilities.

The community, parents, teachers, and educational support personnel must be involved through site-based decisionmaking in designing these facilities. Construction designs should incorporate original art.

Stable and sufficient funding must be provided for the design, construction, maintenance, and operation of the school facility. Funding for custodial, maintenance, and secretarial staff, and resources should be provided in every facility in order to maintain a safe, healthful, attractive, aesthetic, and clean environment for both students and staff. (92, 95)

C-17. Safe School Environment

The National Education Association believes that all educational facilities must be smoke-free and safe from all environmental and chemical hazards, including lead from water pipe systems within schools, inadequate ventilation, and sick-building syndrome. Appropriate provisions should be made for individuals allergic to perfumes and other aerosols. The Association urges the establishment and vigorous enforcement of stringent standards at least equal to private sector standards of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to ensure health and safety. These standards and any noted deviations should be posted at the facility. The Association further urges its affiliates to support local ordinances and state and federal legislation and funding to ensure these health and safety standards.

The Association supports ongoing standardized training and certification of education employees working with potentially hazardous school equipment and in hazardous facilities. The Association believes that such training must include the proper handling, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials and instruction on Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS). Material Safety Data Sheets should be on file in each school building and available to employees upon request.

The Association believes that school personnel, students, and their families should be notified of potential hazards and the action plan for corrections. The Association urges that when facilities are altered or repaired these activities not create additional health hazards. The Association further believes that affected local districts have a responsibility to post immediate notice of these hazards through the public media. (89, 95)

C-18. Radon

The National Education Association believes that all educational facilities must be safe from the hazards of radon and urges its affiliates to seek and support legislation that requires —

a. Testing of all educational facilities for radon

b. Evaluation of current radon testing procedures to determine which procedures are truly effective

c. Immediate corrective action in those schools where radon exceeds safe levels.

d. Notification of school personnel, students, and their families when radon is found. (89, 95)

C-19. Programs Before and After School

The National Education Association believes that all children need adequate and appropriate adult supervision and guidance before and after school hours.

The Association believes that children who have limited or no adult supervision before or after school need local, state, and/or national programs, developed and staffed by qualified and trained personnel, which include opportunities to participate in study-skill sessions, counseling, and guidance in addition to recreational activities. (83, 95)

C-20. Abduction of Children

The National Education Association believes that all children should be protected from abduction and its consequences.

The Association and its affiliates should —

a. Heighten school personnel awareness of this problem through the development of workshops, lectures, and seminars

b. Encourage the development, endorsement, and use of materials to increase student and parent awareness in dealing with abduction lures

c. Cooperate with community organizations and businesses to increase public awareness and understanding of child abduction.

The Association urges state and local affiliates to seek legislative support and publicity in addressing these problems. (84, 95)

C-21. Missing Children

The National Education Association believes that all available means must be utilized at once and continuously used to locate missing children. The Association encourages local and state affiliates to work cooperatively with local programs and/or authorities to raise the public's consciousness about the missing-children crisis, including the dissemination of pictures and information about missing children to school employees.

To aid these investigations, the Association urges that the voluntary fingerprinting of children be conducted in a nonthreatening environment and that the completed fingerprint cards be given to the parent or guardian. (81, 93)

C-22. School Transportation

The National Education Association believes that free transportation should be provided for all public school students residing beyond a reasonable and safe walking distance from their assigned schools. The Association also believes that local school districts should provide students with transportation for all school-related activities.

The Association further believes in safe and orderly transportation of students. Rules, regulations, and procedures must be developed, enforced, and constantly reviewed and revised to ensure it. School bus personnel should be utilized to transport students at all times. (77, 96)

C-23. Comprehensive School Health Programs and Services

The National Education Association believes that every child should have direct and confidential access to comprehensive health, social, and psychological programs and services. The Association further believes that the components must be interactive and coordinated within and between school, home, and community settings.

The Association also believes that there must be integrated school and community efforts to promote the well-being of children and youth and to build support for school and community health programs. The Association believes that schools should provide —

a. A healthful psychological climate and a safe physical environment

b. Food services that provide nutritious meals and support sound nutrition education that helps students to select nutritionally appropriate foods.

The Association also believes that programs in the schools should provide —

a. A planned, sequential, K-12 health education curriculum that integrates various health topics (such as drug abuse, violence, universal precautions, and HIV education); that is taught by teachers specifically prepared to teach the subject; and that enables students to develop the essential knowledge and skills to maintain personal, family, and community health

b. A planned, sequential, K-12 physical education curriculum that encourages students to achieve optimum physical fitness and promotes a consistent active life-style; that offers opportunities for self-expression and social development; that fosters stress reduction; and that is taught by teachers trained in the field

c. Worksite health promotion to improve the health status of school staff to set an example for desired student behaviors.

The Association believes that services in the schools should include —

a. Counseling programs that provide developmental guidance and broad-based interventions and referrals that promote the physical and psychological health of students

b. Services that identify, diagnose, and resolve learning disabilities

c. Health services provided by a licensed professional school nurse that promote the health of students through prevention, case finding, early intervention, and remediation of specific health problems, that provide first aid and triage of illness and injuries, and that provide health counseling

d. A nurse-to-student ratio at each site that is appropriate to provide quality school health care

e. Comprehensive school-based, community-funded student health care clinics that provide basic health care services (which may include diagnosis and treatment) to supplement school nurses

f. If deemed appropriate by local choice, family-planning counseling and access to birth control methods with instruction in their use

g. Coordination with community agencies for support and follow-up activities.

The Association believes that all services available to students must be provided by appropriately licensed and certificated professional personnel. The Association further believes that education employees, parents, students, and personnel from community agencies providing services to students must be involved in the development, implementation, and coordination of services.

The Association urges its affiliates to support legislation to provide comprehensive care to all children and community, state, and national efforts to coordinate services. (69, 96)

C-24. School Counseling Programs

The National Education Association believes that guidance and counseling programs should be integrated into the entire education system, beginning at the prekindergarten level.

Guidance and counseling programs should be provided through counselor/student ratios that best support students in realizing their full potential in all areas of growth and achievement. (87, 93)

C-25. Student Stress and Anger

The National Education Association believes there are increasing mental, emotional, and environmental pressures upon children and youth which result in drug and alcohol abuse, violence, vandalism, school dropouts, and suicide.

The Association also believes stress and anger management programs, including follow-up support, that address the needs of children within both school and community settings should be provided. Workshops to prepare education employees and parents/guardians are necessary to help students deal with stress and anger. (80, 96)

C-26. Effective School Climate

The National Education Association believes that an effective school climate is necessary for promoting educational excellence in our public schools. The Association believes that an effective school has a positive environment where school employees, students, and parents communicate with, care for, respect, and trust each other and where the school as an institution cares for, respects, trusts, and fosters an understanding among the people in it.

Education employees and students should be protected from all forms of harassment, including verbal abuse, name calling, intimidation, and other actions leading to a hostile and offensive environment. Appropriate education must be given and timely action must be taken to ensure that harassment does not recur. The Association believes that due process must be guaranteed to all individuals accused of harassment. (87, 95)

C-27. Discipline, Order, and Safety Required for Learning

The National Education Association believes that discipline, order, and safety are essential for an environment conducive to learning. A concerted effort among education employees, parents/guardians, students, administrators, community members, and school governing boards is necessary to achieve safe, orderly schools. The Association therefore believes that the following guidelines must be followed in the schools:

a. Students should be empowered with strategies and skills, including conflict resolution, that will develop tolerance, self-discipline, and self-control. Students should be taught to distinguish between their own rights and responsibilities and the rights and responsibilities of others.

b. An orderly environment, including infrastructure, for students and education employees must be established on the basis of rational methods and procedures to promote school activities and behaviors that enhance teaching and learning.

c. A truly safe school setting must extend beyond freedom from danger to freedom from fear of danger, which inhibits both teaching and learning as well as participation in school and community activities.

The Association further believes that all education employees should receive formal, extensive, and ongoing training in strategies which promote discipline, order, and safety in both school and school-related activities. (94, 96)

C-28. Support and Training for Parents/Guardians of Disruptive Students

The National Education Association believes that appropriate school behavior begins and is reinforced in the home. Parents/guardians of children who are disruptive often need support and training in order to reduce negative behavior and increase student learning. Programs that provide assistance and training in child development, effective parenting skills, and strategies for dealing with disruptive students should be available for parents/guardians. Schools can be instrumental in identifying and recommending strategies that can assist parents/guardians. (96)

C-29. Nonviolence in Schools

The National Education Association believes that school employees and students should be safe from physical, verbal, and psychological violence. The Association believes that schools should provide appropriate services within the regular education program or develop appropriate alternative education placement programs for students who are dangerous to other students and education employees.

Students must receive due process before placement in an alternative program.

The Association urges the appropriate agencies to use their authority to prevent violence in schools and in society. (86, 93)

C-30. Student Sexual Orientation

The National Education Association believes that all persons, regardless of sexual orientation, should be afforded equal opportunity within the public education system. The Association further believes that every school district and educational institution should provide counseling and suicide prevention programs by trained personnel for students who are struggling with their sexual/gender orientation. (88, 95)

C-31. Placement of Students with HIV/AIDS

The National Education Association supports establishing local policy that ensures a free, appropriate public education in a least-restrictive environment for all students infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or with acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS).

The Association believes that the placement of such students in school is a medical decision that should be made on a case-by-case basis by qualified health care professionals.

The Association further believes that students should not be refused admittance to school or subjected to any other adverse action solely because they have tested positive for HIV or have been diagnosed as having AIDS. (87, 93)

C-32. Suicide Prevention Programs

The National Education Association believes that suicide prevention programs including prevention, intervention, and postvention

must be developed and implemented. The Association urges its affiliates to ensure that these programs are an integral part of the school program. (89, 92)

C-33. Youth Camp Safety

The National Education Association believes that all youth camps must provide proper supervision and instruction as well as secure facilities that meet current safety and health standards.

The Association urges its members to support legislation establishing guidelines that require that all camp personnel be qualified and trained for their areas of responsibility. (76, 87)

C-34. Student Rights and Responsibilities

The National Education Association believes that basic student rights include the right to free inquiry and expression; due process; gender equity; freedom of association; freedom of peaceful assembly and petition; participation in the governance of the school, college, and university; freedom from discrimination; freedom from commercial exploitation, including the payment of subminimum wages; and equal educational opportunity.

The Association believes that each of these rights carries with it a comparable responsibility. Student responsibilities include regular school attendance, conscientious effort in classroom work, and conformance to school rules and regulations. Students share with the administration and faculty a responsibility to develop a climate within the school that is conducive to wholesome learning and living. No student has the right to interfere with the education of other students. It is the responsibility of each student to respect the rights of each person involved in the educational process.

The Association believes in the confidentiality of student information and opposes its dissemination to any organization or institution without the consent of the student and/or parent.

The Association also believes that student rights must be safeguarded when students are involved in commercial premium campaigns and fundraising activities. (69, 95)

C-35. Drug and Alcohol Testing of Students

The National Education Association believes that mandatory drug and alcohol testing of students without probable cause is an unwarranted and unconstitutional invasion of privacy and opposes such testing.

The Association further believes schools must immediately notify parents of students suspected of abusing drugs and alcohol and provide information about support services. (87, 93)

C-36. HIV/AIDS Testing of Students

The National Education Association opposes mandatory/involuntary human immunodeficiency virus/-acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) testing of students. (87, 93)

C-37. Optimizing Students' Time To Learn

The National Education Association believes that time to learn is essential in promoting optimum achievement in the schools.

The Association believes that —

a. Student absences from school have adverse effects on program continuity, academic achievement, and mastery by the student. The Association urges its affiliates to work with school districts, parent groups, other appropriate community groups, and public agencies to develop programs to reduce student absences.

b. Excessive or unusual working hours are detrimental to a student's attention span and academic achievement. The child labor laws, as structured by the Fair Labor Standards Act, must be monitored, enforced, and strengthened by local, state, and national governing bodies. (79, 96)

C-38. Media, Games, and Children

The National Education Association recognizes that children are an especially vulnerable audience who must be protected from violence, prejudice, sexual content, stereotyping, and exploitation by advertisers; makers of video games, audiocassettes, board games, and toys; and other media professionals. To help children become critical users of the media, the Association encourages advertisers, media professionals, and parents to use materials of the highest caliber. To help parents become critical consumers, the Association encourages manufacturers of games and toys to make explicit to consumers, prior to purchase, the nature of product contents through specific labeling. Radio and television programmers should make these materials available to children, with consideration given to the child's age, the time of day, and the subject matter. The Association encourages advertisers and media professionals to use standard grammar and correct spelling and to refrain from the use of sexist terminology and profanity.

The Association urges its affiliates to establish media study committees to monitor media activities, to provide research materials and training for members, and to promote positive educational programming. The Association also urges the movie industry to edit movies for educational use and make them available in video format. The Association further urges its affiliates and members to help parents determine the types of programs their children should listen to or view. (69, 95)

C-39. Impact of Homelessness and Poverty on Children and Youth

The National Education Association believes that education must be provided for all children and youth and believes that poverty negatively impacts children's ability to learn and deprives them of the opportunity for academic success.

The Association believes in the right of all children and youth, including those without a permanent legal address, to an education, adequate housing, and health care.

The Association further believes that school and community groups should work cooperatively to meet the needs of homeless and impoverished children and youth. (88, 96)

C-40. Extracurricular Participation

The National Education Association believes that the successful completion of an academic program is the first priority for all students. The Association therefore urges pre-K through 12 schools, colleges, universities, and parents to accept their educational responsibilities to student athletes and participants in other extracurricular activities. Exploitation of these students for economic and/or personal gain is deplorable.

The Association urges the adoption of fair and reasonable eligibility requirements for student participation in athletics and other extracurricular activities. To promote the continuance of academic success, student progress should be monitored frequently. (84, 93)

C-41. Gender Equity in Athletic Programs

The National Education Association believes that at all educational levels female and male students must have equal opportunity to participate in athletic programs.

The Association urges that athletic funds for facilities, equipment, and remuneration of staff be allocated equally between female and male programs. (74, 93)

C-42. Reduction of Gang-Related Crime

The National Education Association believes that families, schools, communities, businesses, and law enforcement agencies have critical roles in reducing gang-related crime. The Association supports collaboration among these groups in an effort to reduce such crime.

The Association supports education programs that promote positive self-image and academic success — such as dropout prevention/intervention, before-and after-school programs, and job training — particularly for at-risk students in areas where there is a high degree of gang activity.

The Association also believes that the business community has an important role in reducing illegal activities by gangs. The Association supports programs that lead to meaningful job opportunities for youths.

The Association believes that law enforcement agencies should be active participants in education and employment programs to reduce gang-related crimes.

The Association further believes that federal, state, and local governments should develop and implement education and youth employment programs in helping to reduce illegal activities by gangs. (88, 94)

C-43. Juvenile Offenders

The National Education Association believes that juvenile offenders who are convicted of serious crimes and who are contained in detention centers should be provided a healthy environment conducive to positive social change.

The Association further believes that these juveniles, while in this environment, should be provided with education programs that will enable them to become contributing members of society. Teachers of these youths must be prepared to provide instruction in life skills and learning skills.

Juvenile offenders who pose a threat to the health and safety of others and who are not placed in these centers should be provided educational services in an appropriate alternative setting rather than the regular public school setting.

The Association further believes that all education employees working with a student having a record of violent behavior or severe behavioral problems should be immediately informed of the nature, extent, and duration of the student's record of violent acts/disruptive behaviors. Before student placement, these employees should also be provided with teaching strategies that may impact the student's

learning style and a plan for behavior management and modification.

The Association supports the placement of juveniles who are not charged with any offense or

those who are status offenders in separate facilities from those persons who are charged with criminal offenses. (88, 93)

C-44. Alcohol/Tobacco Endorsements

The National Education Association urges the elimination of incongruent and secondary advertising of alcohol and tobacco products. The Association encourages individual performers and organizers of concerts and sporting events to refrain from endorsing and advertising alcohol and tobacco products. (90, 91)

C-45. Alcohol Advertising

The National Education Association believes that alcoholic beverages and their use should not be advertised on television or radio. (88)

C-46. Illegal Drug Trade

The National Education Association believes that illegal drug trade and the money it generates are harmful to our nation and to the youth of our nation.

The Association further believes that its affiliates should advocate for and participate in the development of appropriate educational experiences to educate students about the serious effects of participating in any aspect of illegal drug trade. (88, 89)

D. PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE AMONG EDUCATORS

D-1. Teacher Preparation Programs: Recruitment

The National Education Association believes in a strong program of teacher recruitment with special emphasis on recruitment of underrepresented candidates. Preteaching programs and recruitment efforts should be developed at high schools and community/junior colleges in conjunction with institutions of higher education with teacher preparation programs. These efforts should include the active participation of practicing pre-K through 12 teachers.

Individuals interested in teaching as a career should attend institutions accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). Counselors and advisers should inform students of the advantages of attending NCATE-accredited institutions.

Federally financed loan and grant programs should be established to encourage students to become professional educators. Progressive forgiveness of the loan should be based upon the number of years of professional service.

Grants should be secured from both public and private sources to assist students planning to pursue a career in education. (90, 96)

D-2. Teacher Preparation Programs: Admissions

The National Education Association believes that its affiliates should continue to improve standards for admission into the teaching profession by working cooperatively with teacher training institutions and their professional organizations. Further, the Association believes that the appropriate agency within each state should regularly monitor and evaluate the teacher preparation programs within the state as to content and presentation to ensure quality and continuity. Requirements for admission to college of education programs should be rigorous yet flexible enough to allow admittance to those who demonstrate potential for effective practice. Admission to any program should be based on multiple considerations, such as recommendations of faculty (liberal arts and education), grade-point average, personal interviews, portfolio reviews, and recommendations of persons in related fields, but standardized achievement test scores must not be the sole basis for admission. The selection process shall be a continuous and integral part of the candidate's educational program. Such process shall be nondiscriminatory.

The Association urges appropriate state agencies to monitor projected needs by certification areas and to inform teacher preparation institutions of those needs on a continuing basis. Teacher preparation institutions should counsel and prepare prospective teachers in numbers consistent with projected needs. (70, 95)

D-3. Teacher Preparation Programs: Affiliate Participation

The National Education Association believes that its affiliates should take immediate steps to become involved in college and university committees that control teacher education programs. To this end, the affiliates should —

a. Support inclusion of instruction in school law and in the values, ethics, responsibilities, and structure of professional teacher organizations

b. Support regulations that would place credentialed educators with teaching experience in decision-making roles in departments of education

c. Share in the responsibility for practicum experience with the public schools and the institutions that prepare teachers

d. Encourage affiliate members to promote NEA Student membership among all higher education students working in their classrooms during any part of a teacher preparation program. (70, 94)

D-4. Teacher Preparation Programs: Content and Evaluation

The National Education Association believes that a sound teacher preparation program must be equitably funded and must —

a. Involve practicing, licensed preschool through adult education teachers in the design, implementation, evaluation, and systematic change of the program

b. Involve students preparing to teach in the evaluation and improvement of the standards of the program

c. Involve teacher educators who are licensed and experienced in their instructional areas and demonstrate practical knowledge of schools and classroom teaching

d. Include a policy of affirmative recruitment

e. Include tests, reports, student teaching, portfolio reviews, and other measures of performance designed to assess progress in acquiring the knowledge and skills necessary for effective teaching

f. Include required courses in the liberal arts, subject or grade-level specialty, reading, methodologies for the instruction of the limited English proficiency student, and professional studies that include learning theories, curriculum design, classroom management, discipline, student assessment, and teaching techniques

g. Include instruction and field experience in the uses of appropriate technology for managing and advancing instruction

h. Include instructional content and experience that address our multicultural, multiethnic diversity, recognize the contributions of ethnics and other minorities, and provide techniques for teaching culturally diverse students

i. Involve students preparing to teach in recognizing biases and acquiring the necessary skills and knowledge to assist them in creating a bias-free environment

j. Include instructional content and experience in research and information skills, group processes, shared decisionmaking, strategic planning, the dynamics of intergroup communications, human growth and development, the changing role of the family, exceptional behaviors, and human relations

k. Include a variety of field experiences throughout the preparation program culminating in a practicum

l. Include instructional content in the areas of job contracts, salary schedules, benefit programs, and working conditions

m. Include practical instruction and experience in the processes, strategies, realities, responsibilities, and challenges of collective, shared decision-making, problem-solving, and strategic planning

n. Include course content in awareness and educational programs of all special education areas recognized by federal law

o. Provide access to professional and preprofessional organizations related to the education profession and areas of certification. (70, 96)

D-5. Teacher Preparation Programs: Student Teaching

The National Education Association believes that student teachers should be provided with legal status and liability protection.

Higher education institutions and cooperating school systems should supply any and all instructional materials that student teachers would require during their student teaching terms. Students who are implicitly or explicitly discouraged from outside employment during their student teaching should be provided financial assistance, internship programs, or tuition waivers by the state.

Affiliates should formulate standards for school systems that receive student teachers, including guidelines for cooperating teachers and college coordination of student teachers. Supervising or cooperating teachers in a student teacher program should have reduced teaching loads and be given a minimum established compensation. Acceptance of student teachers should be on a voluntary basis.

The recommendation of the supervising or cooperating classroom teachers in such a program shall weigh heavily in the final decision regarding readiness to enter the teaching profession. Teacher preparation programs should offer alternative placements for student teachers assigned to a school in the event of a strike or other work stoppage in order to meet the requirements for a teaching license. (70, 96)

D-6. Mentor Programs

The National Education Association believes that professional peer support systems such as mentor programs, if or when adopted, should be utilized solely for the development of professional exper-

tise. The Association believes that the planning, implementation, and evaluation of such programs must be negotiated and cooperatively developed and maintained by the school district and the local affiliate.

Qualifications and training of mentors and the duties and responsibilities of all parties must be clearly defined and uniformly administered. Criteria for implementation must be left to the discretion of the planners of each program, and participation must be voluntary. The state or local authority has the obligation to provide hold-harmless protection.

The Association believes that mentors must be compensated for all additional responsibilities and that the program must be fully funded by either the state or the local authority.

The Association also believes that the formative assistance provided by such programs must be independent of any summative evaluation. Mentors should not take part in the formal evaluations of the individuals being mentored.

The Association further believes that any documentation that results from the mentoring process must be confidential and must not be included in the participants' personnel files. (88, 95)

D-7. Administrator Preparation

The National Education Association believes that administrators and staff are partners in the total school program. Administrators must maintain valid administrator licensure and have periodic teaching experience. Areas of instructional content and experience should include participatory decisionmaking, interpersonal skills, personnel selection, staff evaluation, curriculum, school management techniques, and cultural diversity training. Prior to credentialing, an administrator shall have served at least five years in a full-time teaching position. (85, 94)

D-8. A Licensed Educator in Every Professional Position

The National Education Association believes that all educators must have the knowledge and skills necessary to perform their duties.

The Association insists that each professional position, including early childhood development and other specialized and substitute positions, be filled by an educator who has completed, in an accredited institution of higher education, course work required by his/her position and a teacher preparation program and who holds the state license and/or appropriate state vocational license.

The Association will resist any attempts to diminish the quality of learning or services through the elimination of teaching positions, through the subcontracting of teaching and support services, through involuntary assignment out of field, or through the revision of school staff management under the guise of improving educational opportunity. (69, 90)

D-9. Faculty Governance in Higher Education

The National Education Association believes that faculty and staff in higher education should participate in governance of their educational institutions. Higher education faculty should have primary responsibility for determining curricula, methods of instruction, and subject matter; establishing requirements for earning degrees and certificates; reviewing institutional budgets; and making recommendations on financial issues that impact academic programs.

The Association further believes that faculty and staff, where appropriate, should participate in the selection and evaluation process and determine the status of colleagues and administrators, especially appointments, reappointments, and tenure.

The Association also believes it is the primary responsibility of faculty and staff, where appropriate, to establish procedures relative to promotions, sabbaticals, and research support.

The Association believes that collective bargaining provides an additional method of institutional governance. Faculty and staff should determine policies and procedures to govern salary structure, pay increases, fringe benefit programs, calendar, and working conditions. (94, 95)

D-10. Supervision of Extracurricular Activities

The National Education Association believes that extracurricular activities are an important part of the public school experience. Education institutions should adopt policies, standards, and guidelines for staffing extracurricular activities and for hiring personnel who have the necessary skills and knowledge to perform those duties, and for providing staff members with appropriate ongoing training. Qualified education employees must be given the opportunity of first acceptance of paid positions. (94, 96)

D-11. Participation in Professional Associations

The National Education Association believes that every educator has the right and obligation to participate fully in professional associations. The Association further believes that policies adopted by governing boards should provide released time without loss of pay to educators who are fulfilling leadership responsibilities or attending professional meetings. Released time should be equitably provided, without harassment and without preference given to administrative personnel. (86, 95)

D-12. Professional Development Resource Centers

The National Education Association believes that state/regional professional development resource centers provide an opportunity for school employees to share resources, experiences, and ideas for professional growth. These centers should be established, funded, and accessible to all school employees.

The Association believes that members from the local associations should comprise a majority of the membership of the professional development resource center policy board.

The Association supports funding for such resource centers. (82, 96)

D-13. Professional Development

The National Education Association believes that professional development is necessary throughout the career of the education employee. Professional development might include, but not be limited to, continuing education courses, state/regionally developed professional development resource center programs, and local professional development and grant programs.

The Association also believes that such programs should provide equal opportunities for education employees to gain the knowledge and skills they feel are important to their position, to the improvement of their programs, and to their performance as members of their profession. Appropriate technology must be available to all education employees to assure access to information and ideas.

The Association further believes that local professional development and grant programs should assure that appropriate education employees have a decisive voice at every stage of planning, implementation, and evaluation. The Association encourages its affiliates to develop strategies for the implementation of funded programs governed by the appropriate education employees. (76, 95)

D-14. Discipline, Order, and Safety

The National Education Association believes education employees should be provided management techniques on prevention and intervention strategies to assure a positive and safe educational environment.

Ongoing educational training programs in conflict prevention/conflict resolution should be provided for all education employees dealing with students' behavior before, during, and after crisis situations. (94, 96)

D-15. Neurological Disorder Awareness

The National Education Association believes in the establishment and monitoring of a continuing education program that will increase education employee awareness of neurological disorders and their symptoms that hinder student learning capabilities. Qualified health professionals should be cooperatively involved in these programs. (87, 96)

D-16. Teacher Exchange Programs

The National Education Association believes that in our rapidly changing global society both teachers and students will benefit if teachers participate in exchange programs in various cultural, linguistic, educational, and geographic environments.

The Association encourages its affiliates to develop voluntary teacher exchange programs and to cooperate with governing boards to offer such programs within and among the states, among schools of federal agencies within and outside the United States, and abroad.

The Association supports legislation that would enable teacher union representatives from any nation to visit the NEA at our request. (74, 89)

D-17. Education Employee Evaluation

The National Education Association believes that formal performance-based evaluations must be augmented by formative evaluation components in order to assure the continuing competency of all education employees in their respective fields.

An effective evaluation procedure supported by well-developed, continuing professional growth programs will enable all education employees to keep abreast of developments in their areas of specialization. Such procedures, with sufficient resources, can help ensure job competency, identify deficiencies in performance, and provide options such as counseling, training programs, a remediation plan, and opportunities to observe peers.

If following such an evaluation and after being given sufficient time, training, and opportunity for improvement, a person is then formally reevaluated and incompetency can be documented, dismissal proceedings with guaranteed due process may be instituted. Such proceedings must be implemented by administrators/evaluators who are properly trained and held accountable for appropriate and fair evaluation systems.

The evaluation procedure should be cooperatively developed and maintained in conjunction with representatives selected by the local association and should include —

a. Clear performance expectations that are specific to the job description

b. Regular observation of job performance with advance notice and discussion of evaluation visits and a timely consultation after each visit

c. A written evaluation report to be provided to the person being evaluated

d. Opportunity for a written response prior to the placement of the evaluation in the personnel file

dren 14 and under are injured in school [illegible] objects are alive and that at these [illegible]

e. An employee improvement plan that will not interfere with any earned pay increase or longevity credit

f. A provision for an alternative evaluator and/or an opportunity for an alternative evaluation report to ensure a fair and unbiased evaluation of the education employee

g. An unbiased appeals process with an evidentiary hearing under oath.

By participating in an evaluation process, an education employee shall not waive his or her right to due process in any subsequent contractual or legal proceeding. (69, 95)

D-18. Competency Testing and Evaluation

The National Education Association believes that competency testing must not be used as a condition of employment, license retention, evaluation, placement, ranking, or promotion of licensed teachers. The Association also opposes the use of pupil progress, standardized achievement tests, or student assessment tests for purposes of teacher evaluation. (69, 87)

D-19. Administrator Evaluation

The National Education Association believes that procedures for evaluation of administrators should include evaluations by the school employees under their direct supervision. If after being given assistance, sufficient time, and opportunity for improvement, an administrator is formally reevaluated and there is documentation of incompetence, dismissal proceedings with guaranteed due process should be instituted by the chief administrator, provided that administrators/evaluators are properly prepared and held accountable for the implementation of appropriate and fair evaluation systems. (85, 92)

D-20. Evaluation and Promotion in Higher Education

The National Education Association affirms the importance of teaching in institutions of higher education and believes, therefore, that research and publication ought not to be the only criteria on which higher education faculty are evaluated and/or promoted.

The Association further believes that its higher education members must be allowed to determine through the collective bargaining process the methods by which they are evaluated and promoted. (86)

E. GAIN RECOGNITION OF THE BASIC IMPORTANCE OF THE TEACHER IN THE LEARNING PROCESS AND OTHER EMPLOYEES IN THE EDUCATION EFFORT

E-1. Instructional Excellence

The National Education Association believes that to achieve and maintain instructional excellence there must be continual improvement in the education process. The Association also believes that teachers have the primary responsibility for instructional excellence and must have the primary authority to recommend improvements in instruction through a democratic decision-making process. The Association further believes all education employees should support high standards for instructional excellence and contribute to the continual improvement of education. The Association recommends that education employees collaborate in the research, development, and field testing of new instructional methods and materials. (69, 96)

E-2. Time To Teach

The National Education Association believes that "time to teach" refers not only to those hours during which an educator is actually teaching but also applies to those conditions that contribute to the student-teacher relationship. These include a reasonable, carefully defined work load, a duty-free lunch period, an office in which to work, access to telephones, adequate and appropriate office equipment, access to technology, freedom from interruptions during instructional time, unencumbered planning time, time to evaluate student progress, time for implementation of federal and state legislative requirements, and elimination of the noninstructional tasks required of a teacher.

The Association recognizes that accountability requires reporting on the uses of funding derived from federal, state, and local education programs. The Association believes, however, that in order for the classroom educator to spend adequate time on instructional duties, the paperwork burden on the practitioner must be reduced and held to an absolute minimum.

The Association believes that teachers need the freedom and flexibility to schedule time and design programs to meet the needs of students. (69, 94)

E-3. Selection and Challenges of Materials and Teaching Techniques

The National Education Association believes that democratic values can best be transmitted in an atmosphere that does not restrain free inquiry and learning. The Association also believes that quality teaching depends on the freedom to select materials and techniques. Teachers and librarians/media specialists must have the right to select and use materials and techniques without censorship or legislative interference.

The Association deplores prepublishing censorship, book-burning crusades, and attempts to ban books from school libraries/media centers and school curricula. Challenges to the choice of instructional materials and techniques must be orderly and objective, under procedures mutually adopted by professional associations and school governing boards.

Instructional materials and equipment must be provided in sufficient variety and quantity to serve all students. (69, 96)

E-4. Development of Materials

The National Education Association believes that public school teachers and postsecondary faculty should be involved in the development and field testing of all educational materials offered for adoption or purchase by public school districts and educational institutions. Materials in all subject areas should include strategies that encourage student interaction, be development-

ally appropriate, be free of stereotypes, address divergent points of view, contain sufficient activities to teach the concepts, and provide for the evaluation of higher level thinking skills.

Where school districts and educational institutions involve teachers and faculty in the development of any educational materials, participation should be voluntary and compensated. (84, 96)

E-5. Cultural Diversity in Instructional Materials and Activities

The National Education Association believes that educational materials and activities should accurately portray cultural diversity and contributions of ethnic-minority groups. Ethnic-minority teachers must be involved in selecting educational materials and in preparing teachers in their use.

The Association recognizes that additional instructional materials chosen for classrooms and libraries may rightfully contain a number of points of view to allow students to become familiar with the attitudes and recommendations from various segments of the literary world.

The Association acknowledges that many contemporary texts related to ethnic-minority groups do not portray realistically their lifestyles but convey a negative self-concept to ethnic-minority students. The Association believes that educators and governing boards should adopt and use textbooks and other educational materials in all subject areas that accurately portray the contributions of ethnic and other minorities. (69, 95)

E-6. Women in Instructional Materials

The National Education Association believes that educational materials should accurately portray the influence and contributions of women in our nation and throughout the world. (96)

E-7. Religious Heritage in Instructional Materials

The National Education Association believes that educational materials should accurately portray the influence of religion in our nation and throughout the world. (88)

E-8. Impact of Federal and State Legislative Mandates

The National Education Association believes that federal and state mandates regarding school programs should be broad, general guidelines only and should not be based on student achievement. Mandated programs should be established only in conjunction with the Association and its state and local affiliates. These mandates should be assessed by affiliates and local stakeholders with particular attention to their impact upon students, education employees, school programs, and finances. (79, 96)

E-9. Academic and Professional Freedom

The National Education Association believes that academic freedom is essential to the teaching profession. Academic freedom includes the rights of teachers and learners to explore and discuss divergent points of view. Controversial issues should be a part of the instructional program when, in the judgment of the professional staff, the issues are appropriate to the curriculum and to the maturity level of the student. A teacher shall not be fired, transferred, or removed from his or her position for refusing to suppress the free expression rights of students.

The Association also believes that professional freedom is essential to the teaching profession. Professional freedom includes the teachers' right to evaluate, criticize, and/or advocate their personal point of view concerning the policies and programs of the schools. Teachers also have the right to assist colleagues when their academic or professional freedoms are violated.

The Association further believes that legislation and regulations that mandate or permit the teaching of religious doctrines and/or groups that promote antipublic education agendas violate both student and teacher rights. The Association urges its affiliates to seek repeal of these mandates where they exist. (69, 92)

E-10. Intellectual Property Rights

The National Education Association believes that all faculty and staff should retain full ownership of and subsequent control over their intellectual property. (96)

E-11. Access to Copyrighted Materials for Educational Use

The National Education Association believes that maximum access to copyrighted materials that relate to the curriculum is in the public interest. The Association recognizes that the copyright law as revised provides for two parallel sets of rights: the rights of those who create to profit from their efforts and the rights of teachers to a limited use of those materials in teaching.

The Association insists that the public interest requires that the copyright law include an appropriate not-for-profit clause to guarantee to teachers and educational institutions use of copyrighted materials for nonprofit educational purposes. (69, 86)

E-12. Assessment of Student Learning

The National Education Association recognizes the need for ongoing comprehensive assessment of student growth. A student's level of performance must be assessed with authentic measures directly linked to the lessons teachers teach and the materials teachers use.

The Association believes that the primary purposes of assessment are as follows:

a. To assist students and their parents in identifying the student's strengths and needs

b. To encourage students to become lifelong learners

c. To measure the program's effectiveness, communicate learning expectations, and provide a basis for determining instructional strategies

d. To develop appropriate learning experiences for students.

The Association believes that no one measure should be used to determine a student's performance. Teachers must utilize a variety of measures to accurately assess student growth. All methods of assessment shall be free of cultural, racial, and gender biases.

The Association believes that only classroom teachers have the right to decide upon criteria for assessment of students. Further, the Association believes that teachers must exercise final control of the assessment process and dissemination of results. (81, 94)

E-13. Support Personnel in the Education Process

The National Education Association believes that all education employees are essential to the learning environment. The Association recognizes that educational support personnel promote positive role models that enhance the education process. (90, 91)

F. PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF EDUCATIONAL EMPLOYEES AND ADVANCE THEIR INTERESTS AND WELFARE

F-1. Nondiscriminatory Personnel Policies/Affirmative Action

The National Education Association believes that personnel policies and practices must guarantee that no person be employed, retained, paid, dismissed, suspended, demoted, transferred, or retired because of race, color, national origin, cultural diversity, accent, religious beliefs, residence, physical disability, political activities, professional association activity, age, size, marital status, family relationship, gender, or sexual orientation. Affirmative action plans and procedures that will encourage active recruitment and employment of women, minorities, and men in underrepresented education categories should be developed and implemented.

It may be necessary, therefore, to give preference in recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion policies to certain ethnic-minority groups or women or men to overcome past discrimination. (69, 96)

F-2. Pay Equity/Comparable Worth

The National Education Association believes that all workers should be paid on the basis of the requirements, skills, and worth of their jobs and that factors such as the gender or race of the individual performing the job should never play a role in determining salary.

The Association supports all efforts to attain accurate and unbiased forms of job evaluation and to raise the pay of those jobs that are presently undervalued. The "market value" means of establishing pay cannot be the final determinant of pay scales since it too frequently reflects the race and sex bias in our society.

The Association encourages efforts by education employees and others of the work force to gain salary levels appropriate to the skill, value, responsibility, and requirements of their jobs. (82, 93)

F-3. Uniform Compensation

The National Education Association opposes any attempt to establish tiered compensation systems that place entry-level employees on a salary and/or benefits schedule that differs from that of career employees. (86)

F-4. Tax Deductions for Professional Expenses

The National Education Association believes that education employees must continue to perform and develop professionally and that expenses incurred to do so are professional and therefore must be considered as necessary and ordinary and must be uniformly deductible, as an adjustment, from gross income in the computation of federal, state, and local income taxes. Deductible expenses should include, but not be limited to, expenses incurred relating to sabbatical leaves; educational travel for maintenance and improvement of skills; an in-home office; education-related auto use; and, purchasing of teaching supplements and professional supplies, materials, and equipment. (69, 93)

F-5. Collective Bargaining Rights

The National Education Association believes that the attainment and exercise of collective bargaining rights are essential to the promotion of education employee and student needs in society. The Association demands that these rights be advocated where they are now abridged or denied and strengthened where they are now secured. (80, 93)

F-6. Collective Bargaining and Grievance Procedures

The National Education Association believes in the necessity of a public employees' federal collective bargaining law that will not weaken any state or local bargaining laws. The Association demands that federal, state, and local governing bodies bargain collectively with all public employees. The Association supports legislation that would prohibit the negotiating away of any public employee statutory benefit, right, or protection.

The Association also believes that local affiliates and governing boards must negotiate, in good faith, written master contracts. These contracts must include terms and conditions of employment and other matters of concern and include a provision for agency fee.

Grievance procedures shall be provided in the master contract with definite steps to appeal the application or interpretation of the contract. Binding arbitration shall be a part of the grievance procedure.

The Association further believes that binding arbitration and the right to strike must be an integral part of any collective bargaining process.

Coordinated bargaining by Association affiliates on a regional or statewide basis is an important component of collective bargaining.

The Association believes that state affiliates should seek statutory penalties for governing boards that do not bargain in good faith. Further, state affiliates should seek statutory penalties for governing bodies that seek to rescind negotiated agreements by declarations of bankruptcy or by any other means. (69, 96)

F-7. Strikes

The National Education Association denounces the practice of keeping schools open during a strike. The Association believes that when a picket line is established by the authorized bargaining unit, crossing it is strikebreaking and jeopardizes the welfare of school employees and the educational process.

The Association also believes that the chances of reaching voluntary agreement in good faith are reduced when one party to the negotiation process possesses the power to use the courts unilaterally against the other party.

The Association recommends that several procedures be used in resolution of impasse — such as mediation, fact finding, binding arbitration, political action, and strike — if conditions make it impossible to provide quality education. In the event of a strike by school employees, extracurricular and cocurricular activities must cease.

Appropriate teacher training institutions should be notified that a strike is being conducted and urged not to cooperate in emergency licensing or placement practices that constitute strikebreaking. The Association condemns denial of credits to students working in the school for credit as part of a teacher preparation or credential program who have honored a work stoppage.

The Association condemns the use of ex parte injunction, jailing, setting of excessive bail, fines, firing of members, community service in lieu of other penalties, decertification of an organization as the bargaining agent, loss of association rights, and revocation or suspension of tenure, licensure, and retirement benefits in school work stoppages.

The Association urges enactment and enforcement of statutes guaranteeing the rights of school employees when a work stoppage occurs, including the right to present their case to the state or courts, before back-to-work orders are issued.

The Association further urges its affiliates to establish practices and procedures to supply financial and emotional support as well as external and internal publicity for any local engaged in a strike. (69, 94)

F-8. Basic Contract Standards

The National Education Association believes that collective bargaining agreements between education employees and their employers should contain certain standard contractual concepts. Therefore, the Association urges its affiliates to negotiate agreements that include —

a. A grievance procedure that terminates with final and binding arbitration

b. Just cause for any disciplinary action with guaranteed due process through final and binding arbitration and continuation of all employee rights, including full compensation and job security

c. A seniority list that is updated, published, and distributed annually

dren 14 and under are injured in school | objects are alive and that if they can | cer in the Washington, D.C. area

d. Layoff and recall based only on seniority as bargaining unit members, licensure/certification, and to the extent legally permissible, racial balance

e. Employer-paid fringe benefits, including but not limited to comprehensive health, life, dental, vision, and income protection insurance and employee assistance programs, that fully cover bargaining unit members, domestic partners, and their families

f. Membership in the association or the payment of a fair-share fee as a condition of employment

g. Required posting of all vacant or newly created positions along with the right of bargaining unit members to apply for these positions

h. Unassigned preparation, planning, and travel time as applicable for all members of the bargaining unit

i. Specified class size, teaching load, and job description

j. A duty-free lunch period of not less than 30 minutes for all members of the bargaining unit

k. Nondiscriminatory, fair, and equitable treatment of bargaining unit members

l. Contractually defined procedures for evaluation and promotion

m. Released time for association business with full pay and fringe benefits

n. Parental/child rearing leave for employees to provide care for natural or adopted children

o. Contractually defined procedures for ensuring education employee decision-making in curriculum design and related instructional management and reporting systems

p. Salary schedules based upon preparation, professional growth, and length of service and excluding any form of merit pay except in institutions of higher education where it has been bargained

q. Extracurricular and extra-duty assignments filled on a voluntary basis and compensated at no less than the employee's regular rate of pay

r. Retirement benefits based on all income derived from school employment, including extracurricular and extra-duty pay

s. Clearly defined bargaining unit membership

t. Placement on the salary schedule based on qualifications and number of years of experience in the profession

u. A guaranteed safe and healthy working environment

v. The school calendar

w. Protection from unilateral changes in terms or conditions of employment

x. Provisions to define class loads, student contact hours, and contract hours for instructors who are involved in distance learning, and to guarantee that technology and distance learning are not used to supplant employees. (89,95)

F-9. Salaries and Benefits

The National Education Association believes that salary and benefit structures for education employees are matters for collective bargaining. The Association further believes that any proposed or legislated salary and benefit structure should not bypass or undermine the bargaining process or negotiated agreements.

The Association believes that salary schedules should —

a. Be based on preparation, academic degrees, experience, professional growth, responsibilities, and full length of service

b. Assure that initial placement and advancement on the salary schedule are nondiscriminatory

c. Be independent of national certification unless the impact of any national certificate is determined through the collective bargaining process where it exists or by agreement of the local NEA affiliates in those states where it does not exist

d. Provide and maintain structural integrity through the use of an index or percentage guide for experience increments and levels of academic preparation

e. Assure that salary paid for summer employment, continuing education programs, extended contracts, conducting employee training or workshops, and extra duty is not less than the rate for regular pay

f. Assure that salaries paid in nontraditional adult and alternative programs be on par with salaries paid in traditional programs and that any personnel serving lower socioeconomic groups not be paid less than equivalent educational professionals providing similar service to higher socioeconomic groups.

g. Provide for entry-level salaries and career earnings comparable to those of other professions and occupations with similar preparation and responsibilities and be structured to provide compensation levels that encourage classroom teachers to remain in the classroom and support personnel in the educational setting

h. Define "salary increase" to mean the exact monetary differential between the existing salary schedule and the proposed salary schedule — exclusive of incremental adjustments — and all basic benefits.

The Association believes that local affiliates can best promote the economic welfare of all education employees, regardless of source of funding, by following the salary standards developed at the state and national levels. Extra duties performed by education employees should be on a voluntary basis and should be accompanied by equitable extra-duty pay.

The Association believes that performance pay schedules, such as merit pay, are inappropriate.

The Association also believes its affiliates should seek the repeal of laws limiting maximum salaries and benefits for education employees.

The Association further believes that there should be no limit to the number of years of experience an education employee can transfer.

The Association further believes that education employees should be provided with benefits including, but not limited to —

a. Comprehensive insurance programs
   1. Health
   2. Dental
   3. Vision
   4. Hearing
   5. Life
   6. Legal
   7. Workers' compensation
   8. Long-term physical and mental disability

b. Paid leaves
   1. Sick leave, with unlimited accumulation
   2. Personal leave with unlimited accumulation
   3. Bereavement leave
   4. Parental leave, including adoption
   5. Dependent care leave
   6. Sabbatical leave
   7. Professional leave
   8. Association leave
   9. Religious leave

c. Additional remuneration
   1. Severance pay
   2. Tuition reimbursement
   3. Retirement compensation
   4. Unemployment compensation
   5. Benefit extension for laid-off employees

d. Personal assistance
   1. Personal assault protection, and in the event of assault, counseling services and leave that is not subject to sick or personal leave
   2. Employee assistance program
   3. Reimbursement for damages to or loss of personal property at work site
   4. Child care center
   5. An opportunity to participate in a cafeteria-type plan or plan authorized by Section 125 of the U.S. Federal Tax Code.

The Association believes that education employees should have equal access to all benefits, including comprehensive health, dental, and vision insurance and employee assistance programs for their spouses, domestic partners, and/or dependents.

The Association also believes that comprehensive health insurance, life insurance, and long-term disability insurance should be provided for education employees on official leave of absence or parental leave.

The Association further believes that provisions should be made for retirees, their spouses, domestic partners, and/or dependents at their option to continue in the comprehensive health, dental, and vision care program of the school district, educational system, or institution.

The Association believes that, if school districts consolidate or separate, education employees should not lose their tenure or have their salary, benefits, or seniority reduced. (69, 96)

F-10. Faculty Reward Structures in Higher Education

The National Education Association believes that the reward structure for an institution of higher education should reflect the mission of the institution. An institution whose mission is teaching undergraduate students should reward good teaching. An institution whose mission is community outreach should reward service. An institution whose mission is basic or applied research should reward good research. The proper balance between teaching, service, and research is contingent upon faculty and administration agreement on the institutional mission of the particular campus. (95)

F-11. Economic Welfare

The National Education Association is opposed to imposition of any controls that place public employees in an inferior economic position, the elimination of programs that guarantee social and economic justice for the American people, and any program that increases unemployment. (79, 86)

F-12. Civil Rights — Employment Protection

The National Education Association, recognizing the continuing erosion of civil rights, reaffirms its commitment to protect the rights of all education employees. The Association believes that all levels of government should monitor and enforce fair employment practice laws. The Association and its affiliates, working with federal, state, and local officials and agencies, shall work to promote enactment of and compliance with such laws and seek to include these rights in contractual agreements. (91, 96)

F-13. Continuing Employment and Fair Dismissal Practices

The National Education Association believes that security of position must be provided for all education employees through appropriate employment policies, including fair dismissal procedures. The laws and master contracts governing said procedures must afford education employees procedural and substantive due process.

The Association further believes that state laws must provide for the continuing employment and/or tenure of state and/or local education employees and that federal law must provide similar protection for education employees in federal schools. (69, 96)

F-14. Reduction in Force

The National Education Association believes that one of its basic responsibilities is job security and urges its affiliates to support legislation and/or to negotiate in master contracts criteria to be utilized should reduction in force (RIF) occur. Criteria should include seniority, objectivity, nondiscrimination, uniformity of application, and affirmative action. Should RIF become necessary, the number of administrators, supervisors, and managers should be reduced at least in proportion to the number of other education employees being reduced. Contracts should establish recall procedures in which staff would be recalled in the reverse order in which they were laid off. Neighboring districts are encouraged to establish jointly such procedures that on a regional basis would provide priority hiring of laid-off education employees.

The Association also believes that local affiliates should —

a. Negotiate reduction in force policies that exclude performance evaluation from consideration in the RIF process

b. Work cooperatively with governing boards and community leaders to assist in rehiring, relocating, and/or providing alternative career training for laid-off education employees

c. Condemn the improper use of RIF to eliminate complete areas from comprehensive educational and pupil personnel programs.

It must be recognized that reduction of supportive staff and special staff and nonreplacement of retiring and other resigning teachers are both forms of reduction in force. (75, 96)

F-15. Mandated Retraining

The National Education Association believes that when a federal, state, or district mandate requires a school employee to be retrained, it is the responsibility of the mandating agency to provide released time for training, to compensate the employee at the employee's hourly rate of pay, and to provide for the cost of tuition, textbooks, and travel. (88, 90)

F-16. Protection of Education Employees

The National Education Association believes education employees and their students require safe schools and that federal and state legislation protecting all school employees from criminal physical attacks should be enacted.

The Association also believes that when school personnel are the victims of physical attack, verbal abuse, theft, vandalism, or harassment due to gender, sexual orientation, or other causes, they should receive the full support of their employer in pursuing legal and other remedies, as well as receiving reimbursement for their personal and property loss. Time lost due to such injuries shall not be deducted from accumulated sick leave.

The Association further believes that the local association must have the right to reflect professional concerns at a student suspension or expulsion hearing.

The Association urges its affiliates to cooperate with court systems to secure strict enforcement of law in cases involving disturbances in public schools and educational institutions. (70, 96)

F-17. Personnel Policies and Procedures

The National Education Association believes that personnel policies and procedures should be written and developed cooperatively by local associations and their local boards of education or appropriate governing bodies. The Association further believes in a cooperative review for improvement of the personnel policies and procedures. Where it exists, improvements will be made through the negotiation process. (69, 96)

F-18. Site-Based Decision Making

The National Education Association supports site-based decision-making processes that are based on contractual/formal agreements between districts and local associations. The Association believes that the scope of local site decision making should be limited only by the contractual/formal agreement. The Association further believes that such agreements must include the following elements:

a. Voluntary participation by local sites

b. A district-association structure for processing conflict resolution

c. An agreement on the scope of decision-making authority available to sites

d. Decision-making bodies composed of a majority of nonmanagement education employees with all members selected by the constituency represented

e. Compensated planning and training time for staff and governance bodies as well as additional resources necessary for successful implementation

f. Compensation and/or released time for participating staff members. (90, 94)

F-19. Job Sharing

The National Education Association supports the concept of voluntary job sharing as a means of providing a flexible employment opportunity to help meet the varying needs of school employees. The Association believes that there must be fair and equitable distribution of work between both job sharers in terms of the total number of hours of work and the work load.

The Association asserts that job sharing conditions of work must be subject to collective bargaining and that they require the following minimum conditions for successful implementation:

a. Prorated application of the salary schedule with full recognition of years of experience

b. An equitable share of all fringe benefits

c. An agency shop provision

d. The right to revert to full-time status

e. No loss of rights gained through tenure/seniority

f. Proportional credit toward seniority/retirement. (81, 92)

F-20. Misuse of Intern Programs

The National Education Association believes that intern programs should be utilized solely for the development of professional expertise and not as a means of supplanting or reducing educational staff and/or budget. (77, 96)

F-21. Student Workers in Educational Institutions

The National Education Association recognizes the importance of providing employment opportunities for students in educational institutions. The Association deplores, however, the practice of employing students which results in the reduction of the number of permanent education employees. (92)

F-22. Noninstructional Personnel

The National Education Association urges school systems and educational institutions to provide classroom teachers with a supportive staff to free the teacher from nonteaching duties. The Association also urges its affiliates and school systems and educational institutions to become involved in the selection, orientation, and training of noninstructional personnel. The Association believes that school systems and educational institutions must provide appropriate continuing education programs for noninstructional personnel.

The Association calls upon its local affiliates to resist efforts by governing boards to use the employment of noninstructional personnel as an excuse to increase class size. The Association insists that noninstructional personnel have written job descriptions that define their duties and that these employees be used only for assistance to classroom teachers. (69, 95)

F-23. Summer School, Extended School Year, and Year-Round Schools

The National Education Association believes that local affiliates must participate fully in the design, authorization, implementation, evaluation, and continuation of summer school, the extended school year, and year-round schools. Policies governing summer school, the extended school year, and year-round schools must take into consideration the impact on the community and be in accordance with the Association's principles for professional salaries and class size. Employment in these programs must be on a voluntary basis. (75, 86)

F-24. Unemployment/Disability Compensation

The National Education Association supports the inclusion of educators in unemployment and disability compensation legislation at the state and federal levels. (72, 86)

F-25. Subcontracting/Contracting Out

The National Education Association recognizes that all education employees share the same community of interest. The Association believes that greater emphasis must be placed upon securing and retaining the most capable employees. The Association believes that employees should not be displaced by private service providers or by temporary or part-time workers or by volunteers.

The Association strongly opposes subcontracting/contracting out in all public schools and educational institutions. The Association further believes that school districts and educational institutions should not enter into subcontracting agreements that transfer education employees or that abrogate previously contracted benefits, reduce compensation, deny fringe benefits, and/or reduce or eliminate accumulated retirement experience and benefits.

In those instances where subcontracting exists, the Association believes that, in order to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the total

dren 14 and under are injured in school | objects are alive and that if they can | cer in the Washington, D.C. area

community into which the subcontractor enters, all school personnel who are employed through the subcontractor should be required to meet the highest standards of accountability. This should include proper and close screening prior to working in the school district. The subcontractor should submit to the school district validation of its findings and binding assurances that continuing evaluation and broad-based investigation as to the suitability of such personnel will be ongoing during their terms of employment. The Association insists, however, that any requirement concerning criminal history background checks for such personnel must —

a. Provide that information collected not be released to boards of education in a form other than a qualified or unqualifed statement but be kept by the investigating state or national agency

b. Provide that every employee or potential employee has a right to due process and access to records

c. Provide a list of clear, specific, observable, and objective indicators of rehabilitation for each offense

d. Provide that any fee for background checks be paid by the state

e. Provide for employment only after such a background check is completed and the candidate has received clearance, thus prohibiting provisional employment status prior to completion of the background check

f. Most important, provide background checks on all such persons who have regular contact with children. (77, 95)

F-26. Right to Privacy

The National Education Association believes that education employees should be guaranteed rights of privacy. These rights must include —

a. Access to materials in personnel files, which includes being provided a list of all records maintained by an educational institution, being able to inspect and review such records, and obtaining copies of records, explanations, and interpretations of such records, and a record of past accesses

b. Notification in writing within 10 working days of any placement of materials in an individual's file

c. Access to records and opportunity to respond to any record and to challenge records through formal or informal hearings

d. Provision to consent to or deny release of such records, including the right to receive copies of released materials and to purge inaccurate, misleading, and distorted materials

e. Notification and enforcement of these rights by educational institutions

f. A guarantee that only one personnel file per employee exists

g. Confidentiality of medical records

h. Freedom from fingerprinting as a condition of continued employment

i. Refusal of any type of polygraph or lie detector test. (75, 94)

F-27. Privileged Communications

The National Education Association believes that communications between all education employees and students must be legally privileged. The Association further believes that communication between administrators and other education employees must be kept private without the consent of the affected employee. The Association urges its affiliates to aid in seeking legislation that provides this privilege and protects both education employees and students. (74, 96)

F-28. Recording Devices in Schools

The National Education Association insists that the recording or electronic surveillance of the work of any education employee without that person's permission must be prohibited. Any subsequent use of a recording or information obtained by electronic surveillance must have the education employee's permission. (74, 96)

F-29. Protection of Education Employee Advocates

The National Education Association believes in the fundamental right of all education employees to organize in their own self-interest and to speak out in defense of education employees, students, and parents without fear of reprisal.

The Association condemns those governing boards, administrators, and public officials who attempt to fire, demote, transfer, or give punitive assignments to education employees for their leadership in education employee organizations or their forthrightness in questioning apparent violations of their terms of employment. Such actions are an affront to the dignity of all education employees and a desecration of the principles of a democratic education system.

The Association also believes that school administrators, governing boards, and other public officials should respect the dignity of education personnel and reaffirm the rights of citizens to organize through representatives of their own choosing as well as their rights to exercise all other constitutional guarantees.

The Association further believes that an education employee who is required to appear in court in his/her role as an advocate should be provided release time without penalty.

The Association insists that local governing boards and administrators respect the right of Association members to use school property — such as message boxes and meeting rooms — for communication without censorship, prior restraint, or other interference.

The Association shall pursue every recourse to achieve redress of wrongs done to education employees and work for guarantees assuring education employees that reasonable pursuit of their representational responsibilities will cause them neither intimidation, harassment, nor loss of employment. (76, 96)

F-30. Employee Rights Pending Court Action

The National Education Association believes that when criminal charges or civil lawsuits are filed against a school employee, the right of due process must be guaranteed. If an employee is removed from student contact or suspended from a position due to pending court action, all employment rights of the employee shall remain in force, including full compensation and job security.

The Association urges local affiliates to negotiate contract provisions covering procedures to be followed until final disposition of the case. (84, 86)

F-31. Allegations Against Education Employees

The National Education Association believes education employees should be protected from allegations of child abuse made in bad faith.

Any such allegation should be investigated and resolved immediately. The name of the employee should not be publicly revealed until and unless there is a finding of guilt.

Counseling from an outside community agency should be provided for any education employee accused of child abuse, with emphasis upon the fact that such referral does not presume guilt. Additional counseling should be available for the innocent employee after the case is decided.

The Association also believes in procedural and substantive due process for education employees accused of child abuse including a mechanism whereby false or unfounded accusations can be expunged from all records, and supports restoration of job status and all rights and benefits to education employees who are acquitted of child abuse charges. The Association further believes all members should be knowledgeable of current practices in dealing with such allegations. (89, 96)

F-32. Health Examinations

The National Education Association opposes the imposition of physical and mental examinations by governing boards for the purpose of harassment of education employees.

Physical and mental examinations of education employees should be required only when there is probable cause. Results of such examinations shall be subject to medical confidentiality, and the education employee shall be informed of all results.

The Association believes that health-related information must not be released without the written consent of the employee. The employee must have the right to examine and, if needed, correct his/her medical records.

The Association believes that the cost of any required physical or mental diagnostic procedure should be incurred by the agency that requires such procedure and that education employees should be guaranteed the right to select their own physician. (77, 95)

F-33. Drug and Alcohol Testing

The National Education Association believes in a drug- and alcohol-free workplace. However, the Association believes that mandatory and/or random drug and alcohol testing of employees and job applicants is an unwarranted and unconstitutional invasion of privacy and opposes such testing. (87, 94)

F-34. HIV/AIDS Testing of Education Employees

The National Education Association opposes mandatory/involuntary human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) testing of education employees or education employment applicants. (87, 93)

F-35. Employees with HIV/AIDS

The National Education Association believes that education employees shall not be fired, nonrenewed, suspended (with or without pay), transferred, or subjected to any other adverse employment action solely because they have tested positive for the human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) antibody or have been diagnosed as having HIV/AIDS. (87, 93)

F-36. Hepatitis B Vaccination

The National Education Association believes that governing boards should provide free hepatitis B vaccinations to all employees choosing to be or required to be vaccinated. (95)

F-37. Catastrophic Illness Support Programs

The National Education Association supports cancer awareness programs. The Association further supports programs designed to help those coping with cancer and other catastrophic illnesses. The Association encourages its members to avail themselves of such programs. (95)

F-38. Stress on Education Employees

The National Education Association believes that the dynamics of our society and increased public demands on education have produced adverse and stressful classroom and school conditions. These conditions have led to increased emotional and physical disabilities among education employees.

The Association urges its local affiliates, in cooperation with governing boards, to develop stress management and wellness programs that will facilitate the recognition, prevention, and treatment of stress-related health problems.

The Association further urges that the harmful effects of stress on education employees be recognized and demands procedures that will ensure confidentiality and treatment without personal jeopardy.

The Association supports employee assistance programs (EAPs) as a voluntary resource that would assist education employees who are experiencing significant professional or personal problems by providing confidential, professional counseling leading to improved health and job effectiveness. (79, 95)

F-39. Medication and Medical Services in Schools

The National Education Association urges its affiliates to establish procedures for students who must use prescribed medication or who need other medical services during school hours. Procedures should provide that —

a. Only medical personnel be required to administer such medication or perform such medical services

b. A physician's written verification of the student's need for medication or services be required

c. Written permission of the parent or guardian be required

d. The initial dosage of medication not be given in the school except in life-threatening situations. Initial dosage is the first dosage administered from the prescription

e. Each medication given be recorded on a medication log that includes date, time, and signature of the person giving the medication

f. Medication be delivered in and dispensed from a container properly labeled with the name and strength of medication, name of patient, name of physician, date of the original prescription, and directions for use

g. Proper storage for the medication be available.

The Association also urges its affiliates to work for legislation that will protect school personnel from all liability when the adopted procedure is followed. In addition, school personnel have the right to refuse without fear of disciplinary repercussions to administer medication and/or medical services for which school personnel feel unqualified or when proper equipment has not been provided. Medical personnel must be provided additional training by the district prior to performing the medical services in question. (77, 93)

F-40. Save Harmless/Education Employee Liability

The National Education Association believes that educational institutions should —

a. Pay all costs — including attorneys' fees, expenses, and damages — incurred by employees and other agents in defending any civil action arising out of acts or omissions occurring during the performance of their duties

b. Reimburse employees and other agents for all costs incurred in defending any criminal action arising out of acts or omissions occurring during the performance of their duties, provided that said action terminates in favor of the accused.

The Association recommends that educational institutions attempt to secure appropriate insurance to provide the aforesaid payment and reimbursement. (76, 91)

F-41. Transportation Liability Insurance

The National Education Association urges its affiliates to seek the enactment of state and local legislation that would require school systems and educational institutions to provide and to incur the expense of transportation liability insurance for education employees who are requested or required to transport students by private vehicle for any school-related function. (78, 95)

F-42. Misuse of Part-Time Education Employees

The National Education Association believes that part-time education employees should receive the same salary and benefits as full-time education employees prorated according to the work load. The Association deplores the practice of employing part-time education employees for the primary purpose of reducing instructional budgets or for the purpose of reducing the number of full-time education employee positions.

Further, the Association believes that part-time education employees should be employed only when an educational program requires specialized training or expertise not available among the full-time education employees and when the need for such training and expertise does not justify more than half-time employment. (76, 92)

F-43. Substitute Teachers

The National Education Association recognizes the important role of the substitute teacher. The Association encourages both the education community and the public to recognize the singular and specific function that substitute teachers perform in the maintenance and continuity of daily education. The Association believes that substitute teachers must meet the same standards as any other licensed teacher within the state. The Association further recognizes that licensed substitute teachers are professional educators and urges state and local affiliates to promote collective bargaining responsibilities and rights for substitute teachers.

The Association condemns the practice of assigning substitute teachers to regular positions for an extended duration of time. Positions created by extended absence should be filled by available licensed teachers who are eligible to be placed on contractual status by the school district. The Association condemns the use of licensed teachers to substitute for personnel on extended leave without providing full pay plus basic and fringe benefits for the substituting teacher. (75, 88)

F-44. Substitute Educational Support Personnel

The National Education Association recognizes the importance of substitute educational support personnel in the maintenance and continuity of daily operations. The Association believes that an educational support substitute must meet the same standards as the employee for whom he/she substitutes.

The Association supports the right of substitute employees to organize for collective bargaining purposes. The Association also supports the practice of providing schedule pay plus basic and fringe benefits for educational support personnel substituting for permanent educational support personnel on extended leave. (92)

F-45. Educators and Active Duty Service

The National Education Association believes that an education employee whose career is interrupted by a call to active duty service by the National Guard or the reserves should be guaranteed reemployment and all benefits that would accrue if the employee had continued in a position with the school system. (75, 93)

F-46. Employment in Federal Schools

The National Education Association believes that the federal schools should adopt employment practices consistent with federal legislation and with the Association's established policies.

The Association believes that all school employees should share equal responsibilities and that equal rights, benefits, and entitlements should be accorded to all teachers who are employed in federal schools.

The Association urges the development of policies that ensure a minimum of 120 days' notification of military installation and federal school closures. The Association further urges that personnel affected by these closures be provided support by the employer during this transition period. (71, 94)

F-47. Education in Correctional and Rehabilitation Agencies

The National Education Association believes that legislative and professional support should be given to members who teach in federal, state, and local correctional and rehabilitation institutions, hospitals, and other custodial agencies. The Association supports improving the standards of instruction in these institutions. (73, 86)

F-48. Retirement

The National Education Association shall provide leadership in retirement issues and believes that state and local retirement systems and programs should include —

a. Autonomous boards of trustees, the majority of which are elected by and from the membership

b. Actuarial and investment policies that produce sound financing

c. Annual independent review and audit

d. Immediate and full vesting after not more than five years of service

e. Provisions for employee contributions to be a percentage of total compensation, not to exceed the amount contributed by employers. The employer may pay part or all of the employee contribution

f. Provisions permitting the purchase of credit earned while a member of another retirement system

g. Provisions permitting the purchase of credit for sabbatical leaves, maternity/paternity/adoption leaves, and any other approved leaves of absences

h. Normal retirement of at least 50 percent of the highest single year's rate of salary after 20 years of creditable service or at age 55 if fully vested, where actuarially sound, and with destacking provisions; voluntary retirement under these provisions

i. Disability retirement for a service-connected disability available to school employees from the first day of employment. Nonservice-connected disability retirement shall be available after five years of service. The benefit formula for disability retirement should yield benefits comparable to those of normal retirement

j. Automatic cost-of-living increases to maintain purchasing power for retirees and beneficiaries

k. A joint federal-state program to provide those who have been employed in two or more states, in Overseas Dependents Schools, or in other government schools with benefits substantially the same as they would have received if they had retired after a career in one state. Affiliates are urged to support state statutes and proposed federal legislation or any program providing portability coverage

l. Full funding and equitable administration in the granting of retirement credit for military service or provision for purchasing up to five years of retirement credit for military service

m. Nondiscrimination on the basis of gender or marital status

n. Retirement credit for unused sick leave

o. All compensation, including extra-duty pay, in computing retirement benefits

p. Benefits not reduced by other sources of income, including Social Security benefits

q. Preretirement counseling

r. Retirement housing facilities that are funded from sources other than those designated for retirement benefits

s. School employees' contributions and benefits that are not subject to federal income taxation

t. Nondiscriminatory Internal Revenue Service rules and regulations

u. An annual financial statement distributed to all members

v. Tax-sheltered annuity and deferred compensation plans with a broad choice of programs available to all members. These plans should have actuarial tables that do not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, or national origin

w. Provisions to purchase pension credit for any previous Department of Defense teaching service

x. Fully paid comprehensive health insurance, including reimbursement for Medicare Part B premiums, for retired education employees, their spouses, domestic partners, and/or dependents

y. Benefits that are free from double taxation or source taxation by states for retirees living outside of the state where the benefits were earned

z. All retirement benefits for spouses be equally available for domestic partners

aa. Benefit formulas that provide full-year credit for each school year worked and provide that credit regardless of the number of hours worked per day. (69, 94)

F-49. Social Security

The National Education Association believes that Social Security should be available to eligible education employees where desired, but should not be mandated. Contracts with Social Security should provide for supplementary plans rather than integrated or coordinated plans.

The Association urges the reform of Social Security laws to eliminate discriminatory offset provisions and discrimination based on sex, marital status, or time of retirement and to reduce the retirement age. No benefit promised or no benefit for which money has been collected should be withdrawn without adequate replacement.

The Association also believes that Social Security retirement and survivor benefits should be based upon the Social Security program and Social Security taxes. Health and disability programs should be removed from the Social Security program and financed from general tax revenues. The Association supports the goal of comprehensive health insurance for retirees. (77, 93)

F-50. Protection of Retirement System Assets and Earned Benefits

The National Education Association believes that retirement system assets can be invested in all types of investments. Equal consideration should be given to probable income and probable safety of the capital. All retirement benefits earned by school employees should under the law be payable to such school employees. Every effort should be made to maintain or improve existing retirement benefits. No person participating in a retirement system should be forced to accept any reduction in benefits below those in force at any time during the period of membership. The retirement benefits are earned and, therefore, inviolate.

The Association is aware of incursions on retirement system assets by state and municipal governments. Such incursions involve either a misuse of assets or the failure to appropriate required funds to the system. Both practices result in increasing accrued liabilities, which reduces the financial soundness of the system and jeopardizes the security of school employee retirement benefits. The Association believes that these incursions on retirement systems can best be prevented by the passage of federal and/or state legislation.

The Association also believes that a retirement system should be exempt from federal regulations when its plan is in compliance with minimal standards prescribed by federal, state, and local statutes. (76, 86)

F-51. Management of Education Employee Retirement Assets

The National Education Association believes that the boards of retirement systems of education employees should make every effort to participate in the decision-making process of corporations in which the systems hold stock by casting votes as stockholders that benefit the interests of the retirement systems and those of the united education profession and by electing to corporate boards members and/or representatives who support public education.

The Association further believes that the boards of retirement systems should coordinate their voting in companies in which they have a mutual interest. (94)

G. SECURE PROFESSIONAL AUTONOMY

G-1. State Professional Standards Boards

The National Education Association believes that the profession must govern itself. The Association also believes that each state should have a professional standards board, composed of a majority of practicing public school teachers.

Professional standards boards should have exclusive authority to license and to determine criteria for how a national certificate will be recognized for professional educators. Further, these boards should have the exclusive authority to establish the standards regarding licensure, including procedures for suspension and revocation. The Association opposes legislation that compromises the authority of state standards boards and urges the elimination of state statutes that conflict with this authority. The Association believes that these boards should apply NCATE standards as a minimum for granting, denying, or withdrawing the approval of teacher preparation programs. (69, 95)

G-2. Certification

The National Education Association supports voluntary professional certification by which the profession grants recognition to an individual who has met qualifications specified by the profession. The Association asserts that this function must be fulfilled by a national standards board of professional educators that is composed of a majority of practicing public school teachers.

The national standards board of professional educators should establish appropriate assessment procedures by which individuals may demonstrate exemplary practice in pedagogy and in subject matter areas, should issue permanent certificates to all individuals who meet the criteria as established by the national board, and should maintain a roster of those who have been certificated.

The Association supports the periodic evaluation of such certification procedures to ascertain whether cultural, economic, gender, racial, or age bias is perpetuated by the requirements for certification. (87, 95)

G-3. Licensure

The National Education Association advocates rigorous state standards for entry into the teaching profession. These standards, as established by the professional standards boards, shall include high academic performance, field training experience that includes student teaching, and passage of appropriate pedagogical and subject matter tests. Tests should be valid and unbiased and should be included as one element of comprehensive assessment for completion of a teacher preparation program as well as for licensure into the profession.

The Association asserts that a teaching license should signify that an individual entering the teaching profession is competent to teach. A teaching license must be recognized as the primary requirement for employment in every public and private school (pre-K through 12). No license should be issued unless an individual possesses the entry-level knowledge and skills required for teaching. No temporary or emergency licenses should be issued. No assignments should be permitted outside the teacher's area of licensure without appropriate concurrent retraining supported by the local district.

The Association urges the elimination of state statutes/regulations that require teachers to renew their licenses. Where such renewal continues to be required, standardized literacy and basic skills tests to determine competency should not be used.

The Association supports regulations that would put professional educators, the majority of whom are licensed and practicing public school teachers, in state licensing agencies.

The Association supports the periodic evaluation of licensure procedures to ascertain whether cultural, economic, gender, racial, or age bias is perpetuated by the requirements for licensure. (85, 96)

G-4. School Nurses

The National Education Association believes that all students should have access to the immediate services of a licensed professional school nurse. The Association urges affiliates to enroll school nurses in active membership and to seek legislation that provides licensure/certification and inclusion in collective bargaining agreements.

The Association believes that professional development programs should be available to all licensed/certified school nurses to augment

their skills in delivering health care services. The Association further urges special programs for those school nurses who deal with students with disabilities. (80, 96)

G-5. Accreditation in Higher Education

The National Education Association supports strong regional, state, national, and discipline-based accrediting bodies that promote and encourage faculty participation in the accrediting process. The Association believes that programs, faculties, administrations, and facilities should be reviewed to determine their ability to enhance learning opportunities for students. The Association further believes that accrediting agencies should not impose standardized curricula, assessment models, or pedagogical methods on institutions of higher education but rather should base accreditation on standards as applied to the institutional mission. (95)

G-6. Accreditation of Teacher Preparation Institutions

The National Education Association believes that teacher education programs should be approved at two levels: at the state level through an agency such as a professional standards board and at the national level through the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education.

The Association believes that NCATE and its governing boards must include representatives of all levels of the teaching profession as well as students preparing to teach. (69, 87)

H. UNITE EDUCATIONAL EMPLOYEES FOR EFFECTIVE CITIZENSHIP

H-1. The Education Employee as a Citizen

The National Education Association believes that every education employee has the right and obligation to be an informed and politically active citizen. The Association further believes that, as private citizens, education employees have the right to express their personal viewpoints in public without fear of censorship or intimidation. The Association supports voter education to alert new voters to voting laws and procedures and key political issues. The Association urges local affiliates to seek written governing board policies to guarantee education employees their political rights, including registering and voting, participating in party organizations, performing jury duty, discussing political issues publicly, campaigning for candidates, contributing to campaigns of candidates, lobbying, organizing political action groups, and running for and serving in public office, including boards of education. The Association also believes that local government units should be prevented from restricting the right of education employees to run for any elective office. Provisions should be made to enable education employees to serve in public office without curtailment of annual increments, tenure, retirement, or seniority rights, or to carry out jury duty without personal financial loss.

Major decisions affecting schools, colleges, and universities are made by elected officials or their appointees. Therefore, the Association believes that it is the duty and responsibility of education employees to involve themselves in the selection, election, and reelection of qualified, committed candidates who support goals that will provide quality education.

The Association believes that it is the duty and responsibility of all involved in education to work for the recruitment, election, and reelection of proven friends of public education to public office. Therefore, the Association urges its members to become politically involved and to support the political action committees of the Association and its affiliates. (69, 85)

H-2. The Right to Know

The National Education Association recognizes that the survival of a constitutional representative democracy is inherently dependent upon an informed electorate. Open meeting and public disclosure laws are essential to permit the monitoring of governmental actions. Therefore, the Association commits itself to protect the right of its members to be informed by their government, duly observing obvious national security interests. (72, 86)

H-3. The Right to Vote

The National Education Association believes that the principle of one-person — one-vote must apply at all levels of government, including the election of the President of the United States.

The Association recognizes the right to vote as a constitutional right guaranteed to all eligible citizens. The Association further supports the continued maintenance of the provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Affiliates should support simplified voting and absentee voting provisions for all elections and uniform registration requirements without restrictive residency provisions. They should further support voter education to alert voters to voting laws and procedures and key political issues. (71, 96)

H-4. U.S. Constitutional Convention

The National Education Association believes that the U.S. Constitution safeguards freedoms fundamental to our society. The Association urges that all proposed changes to the Constitution be directed through the traditional congressional proposal and state ratification process rather than through the convening of a constitutional convention, which opens the Constitution to the possibility of total revision. (82, 86)

H-5. Member Involvement in Community Organizations

The National Education Association encourages its members to become involved in citizen-based community organizations and to influence those organizations to address issues of common concern to their local, state, and national education associations. (92)

H-6. National Health Care Policy

The National Education Association believes that affordable, comprehensive health care is the right of every resident.

The Association supports the adoption of a single-payer health care plan for all residents of the United States, its territories, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

The Association will support health care reform measures that move the United States closer to this goal and that achieve universal and comprehensive health care coverage, control costs while assuring quality, emphasize prevention of health care problems, and are financed by means that assure greater equity in the funding of that health care.

The Association further believes that until a single-payer health care plan is adopted, Congress should make no cuts in Medicare/Medicaid benefit levels or in federal funding of the Medicare/Medicaid program. (78, 94)

H-7. Energy Programs

The National Education Association believes that a national energy policy must be established that would reflect the efficient use of energy from all sources, urge research to develop new sources of energy, stress rapid development of renewable energy sources, and promote conservation.

The Association urges its affiliates to support legislation that would ensure the energy-efficient operation of public schools during the school year and encourages the use of new energy sources and energy-efficient design in school renovation and construction.

The Association encourages its local affiliates to support efforts that develop energy conservation awareness and school building energy audit programs. The Association urges the support of programs to investigate energy efficiency recommendations, research, and public health and safety programs for all educational levels in the schools. (77, 94)

H-8. Environmental Responsibility

The National Education Association believes that businesses and governmental agencies should be responsible for designing, producing, and using products that are reusable, recyclable, biodegradable, or disposable without contaminating the environment.

The Association encourages its affiliates and members to include these criteria in selection of products for use and to work with school systems and educational institutions in developing purchasing policies using these criteria.

The Association further believes that business and governmental agencies should dispose of waste in a manner that will have the least possible impact on the environment. (90, 95)

H-9. Historic Preservation

The National Education Association encourages the preservation of historically significant lands and structures for the purposes of preserving our nation's heritage and maintaining important historic resources for future generations. (90, 94)

H-10. Statehood for the District of Columbia

The National Education Association affirms that all citizens of the United States should enjoy the full benefits of citizenship. Accordingly, the Association urges its affiliates to support efforts to achieve statehood for the District of Columbia.

The Association believes that the concept of fiscal autonomy is consistent with this position and that the federal payment to the District of Columbia should be based on an established formula. (69, 88)

I. PROMOTE AND PROTECT HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS

I-1. Peace and International Relations

The National Education Association recognizes the interdependence of all people. The Association believes in the ideals of peace, freedom, and human dignity based upon respect for individual and cultural diversity. The Association believes that peace is superior to war and, in this nuclear age, is basic to the survival of civilization.

The Association urges the nations of the world, through cooperative talks, to develop treaties and disarmament agreements that reduce the danger of nuclear and conventional wars so that resources may be used to improve the quality of life.

The Association supports the peaceful uses of outer space and opposes federal spending that would extend the arms race into outer space.

The Association recognizes that the United Nations can be an effective instrument for furthering world peace, supports the 1948 UN resolution relating to genocide, and promotes the rights of all people by exposing the horrors of war, racism, and genocide.

The Association supports the concept of a U.S. Institute of Peace. The Institute should be sufficiently funded to provide programs, training, and research data in developing peacemaking and conflict resolution skills as well as provide for the publication and dissemination of information in this field.

The Association further supports the development of peace and conflict resolution curricula in teacher preparation programs. (73, 96)

I-2. Peaceful Resolution of Conflicts

The National Education Association urges the nations of the world to develop, through cooperative talks, treaties that guarantee the rights of nations to coexist within safe and secure borders. The Association applauds those nations that have negotiated and continue to negotiate agreements with further guarantees of peace and cooperation.

The Association believes that the Education International should continue to facilitate the building of bridges of understanding and peace by initiating dialogue among education employees in areas of conflict. (85, 95)

I-3. World Court

The National Education Association believes in the concept of the rule of law throughout the world and recognizes that the World Court is one instrument to resolve international disputes peacefully.

The Association urges participation by the United States in deliberations before the court. (86)

I-4. World Hunger

The National Education Association believes that worldwide attention needs to be focused on hunger and malnutrition. The Association supports continued relief to those in need as well as the education of children, youth, and adults concerning world hunger and its effects so that they may develop the capacity and the commitment to resolve these problems. (75, 89)

I-5. Covert Operations and Counterintelligence Activities

The National Education Association believes that U.S. covert operations and counterintelligence activities should be compatible with the basic principles of our democratic society.

The Association further believes that all such activities should be conducted under the jurisdiction of the executive and legislative branches of our government and that individuals must be held accountable when they work outside of the specific directives issued for a given operation. (89)

I-6. Nuclear/Freeze Cessation

The National Education Association believes that nuclear war, the common enemy of all nations and peoples, is not survivable. The proliferation of weapons technology and the sale and distribution of conventional and nuclear weapons increase the possibility of nuclear war.

The Association believes the United States and all other nations should adopt a verifiable freeze on the testing, development, production, upgrading, emplacement, sale, distribution, and deployment of nuclear weapons, materials, and all systems designed to deliver nuclear weapons. The Association supports the development of treaties for the cessation of all nuclear weapons testing, providing they contain adequate verification and enforcement provisions. The Association supports the development of treaties to eliminate the world's nuclear weapons arsenals. (82, 96)

I-7. Nuclear Facilities, Radioactive/Chemical Pollutants, and Waste Incineration

The National Education Association believes that strict monitoring of nuclear facilities and radioactive/chemical pollutants and waste incineration should be required. The Association urges the development and implementation of new technologies for the safe transport and recycling of all wastes. It further urges regulation of the U.S. Department of Energy by an independent agency to reduce the further radioactive pollution of our environment.

The Association supports programs that would educate the public to the dangers and benefits of nuclear power, recycling of nuclear wastes, problems of nuclear waste disposal, and health risks associated with waste incineration.

The Association believes that the people of a state should make the final determination as to whether or not toxic and/or nuclear waste processing sites or the transportation of nuclear waste shall be within their state boundaries. Contiguous states directly affected environmentally by processing sites should be included in the final determination. Strict guidelines concerning the construction and operation of waste incinerators should be required. The Association further believes that such facilities should not be constructed within a 10-mile radius of any school facility.

The Association urges its affiliates to seek legislation and local policies to ensure a safe environment. The Association further believes that education employees must be involved in the development and dissemination of emergency plans in the case of accidents that potentially could result in environmental or health hazards. (89, 92)

I-8. Global Environmental Restoration

The National Education Association believes that when pollution occurs the responsible entities must be accountable for an expeditious, complete cleanup and restoration of the environment and its ecological systems. (90, 93)

I-9. International Consumer Protection

The National Education Association believes that products sold and/or advertised abroad by U.S.-based companies must at least meet the consumer, health, and safety standards that are required for trade within the United States.

Furthermore, the Association opposes coercing other nations to accept U.S. products that do not meet those nations' consumer, health, and safety standards or practices. (90)

I-10. Human Rights

The National Education Association believes that the governments of all nations must respect and protect the basic human and civil rights of every individual, including equal access to education. The Association deplores the use of any action that limits or prohibits the free and responsible exercise of these rights. The Association calls on the world community of educators to lead in the effort to prevent any encroachment on basic human and civil rights and urges the U.S. government to withhold all forms of military aid to governments that violate these rights.

The Association believes that violence is abhorrent. The Association condemns tolerance of violence and calls on all nations of the world (a) to pass and enforce measures to curtail and prevent actions and practices that inflict pain, suffering, mutilation, or death, and (b)to offer asylum to those threatened by abhorrent actions.

The Association deplores the holding of hostages, all forms of torture, and the taking of human life in the name of making a political statement. The Association believes that it is the responsibility of all governments to discourage such actions by individuals or groups of individuals.

The Association calls upon all nations to release all educators and students who are being held without charge and to refrain from the use of coercion and arbitrary detention to punish the people of a specific area of their territories. (77, 94)

I-11. Civil Rights

The National Education Association is committed to the achievement of a totally integrated society. The Association calls upon Americans to eliminate — by statute and practice — barriers of race, color, national origin, religion, philosophical beliefs, political beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, size, marital status, and economic status that prevent some individuals, adult or juvenile, from exercising rights enjoyed by others, including liberties decreed in common law, the Constitution, and statutes of the United States. Civil order and obedience to the law must be ensured without abridgment of human and civil rights. All individuals must be assured a speedy and fair judicial process with free legal counsel for those in need. To be effective citizens, individuals must be trained and aided in developing strategies and expertise that will enable them to operate effectively in a democratic society.

The Association opposes any amendment to the U.S. Constitution that curtails basic civil rights. (69, 95)

I-12. Human and Civil Rights of Children and Youth

The National Education Association believes that the human and civil rights of children and youth must be protected.

The Association opposes the exploitation of children and youth under any circumstances. The Association condemns the use of children and youth by organizations, governments, and dissident political/military movements to advance their political objectives. The Association decries abuses of the rights of children and youth that may occur when governments suspend legal guarantees during times of political unrest and thereby subject young people to physical or mental abuse, violence, and unwarranted detention or incarceration.

The Association opposes the impress or acceptance of minors into the service of the armed forces of any government or into the service of revolutionary forces under any circumstances.

The Association further believes that children and youth in detention centers must be provided educational programs that will enable them to become contributing members of society. Teachers in such centers must be prepared to provide instruction in life skills and learning skills.

The Association condemns the practice of punishing children and youth in trouble by placing them in abusive environments and believes

that alternatives to incarceration must be developed. The Association opposes the placement of children and youth who are not charged with any offense in facilities with those persons who are charged with criminal offenses. There should be separate facilities for these detained minors.

The Association opposes the imposition of the death penalty or life imprisonment without parole on individuals whose offenses were committed prior to age 18. (88)

I-13. Family Planning

The National Education Association supports family planning, including the right to reproductive freedom.

The Association urges the government to give high priority to making available all methods of family planning to women and men unable to take advantage of private facilities.

The Association further urges the implementation of community-operated, school-based family planning clinics that will provide intensive counseling by trained personnel. (85, 86)

I-14. The Right to Organize

The National Education Association believes that all people have the right to organize in order to achieve an improvement of their living conditions through their own free and independent unions and organizations. The Association urges that this right be advocated where it is now abused or denied and strengthened where it is now secured.

The Association deplores antiunion activities by business interests, school districts, and government agencies, including efforts that attempt to destroy and undermine labor unions and organizations, penalize members for union involvement, and deprive workers of their right to organize and bargain. (82, 93)

I-15. Displaced Workers

The National Education Association believes that entities that close, move, sell, downsize, or reorganize their facilities have an obligation to provide displaced employees with a variety of retraining and support programs. These entities shall assist their employees with placement in jobs having comparable pay and benefits and shall maintain existing union contracts.

The Association opposes the use of public funds to encourage the movement of U.S. companies to other countries at the expense of U.S. union labor. (92, 93)

I-16. Use of Union-Made Products and Services

The National Education Association recognizes the historical role of organized labor in its struggle for economic and social justice. The Association advocates the use of union-made products and services. The Association supports the use of appropriately established boycotts and picket lines. (91, 94)

I-17. Migrant Workers

The National Education Association is concerned with the plight of migrant workers.

The Association supports the efforts of migrant workers to be represented in collective bargaining by the organization of their choice. (85)

I-18. Immigration

The National Education Association supports efforts to improve the immigration process, including the provision of due process, political asylum, and timely legalization without regard to national origin.

The Association opposes any immigration policy that denies human and/or civil rights or educational opportunities to immigrants and their children regardless of their immigration status. The Association condemns such policies as inhumane and discriminatory. The Association supports policies that protect the integrity of the family unit.

The Association believes that English and citizenship classes must be available in sufficient numbers to ensure that immigrating individuals can comply with all federal mandates for permanent residence and/or citizenship. (84, 95)

I-19. Housing and Health Care for All

The National Education Association believes that all members of our society have the right to adequate housing and health care.

The Association urges its affiliates, in conjunction with local school/community groups, to seek and support legislation, policies, and programs to provide adequate housing and health care for the homeless and for all members of our society. (89, 91)

I-20. Fair Housing

The National Education Association believes that all citizens should be free to reside in the communities of their choice. The Association urges local affiliates, in conjunction with other school/community groups, to lead in breaking down barriers that limit this freedom. The Association strongly opposes the discriminatory practice of redlining and urges affiliates to work toward its elimination. (69, 87)

I-21. Invasion of Privacy

The National Education Association believes that every individual has a right to privacy. The Association continues to be concerned about the indiscriminate surveillance of citizens or groups by private and public agencies. The Association condemns the use of information gathered and stored and the exchange of such information without explicit release from the person or persons involved.

The Association recognizes that such rights to privacy and confidentiality must be guaranteed through federal and state legislation. The Association urges its affiliates to seek legislation that will guarantee these rights. (70, 86)

I-22. Freedom of Creative Expression

The National Education Association supports freedom of expression in the creative arts and therefore deplores any efforts by government to suppress, directly or indirectly, such expression. The Association further supports the freedom of publicly funded agencies to exercise judgment in the awarding of grants to individuals and organizations. (90)

I-23. Violence Against Women and Girls Worldwide

The National Education Association believes that domestic and other violence against women and girls is abhorrent. The Association therefore condemns tolerance of violence against women and girls and calls on the nations of the world to pass and enforce measures to curtail and prevent actions, policies, and practices that inflict pain, suffering, or death. (93, 94)

I-24. Sexual Assault

The National Education Association supports efforts that will prevent and protect members of our society from becoming victims of sexual assault. The Association urges states to develop a systematic process for gathering evidence when such assault occurs and supports the use of DNA testing as a means to identify perpetrators of sexual assault. Further, the Association supports fair and equitable treatment by health, hospital, and law enforcement agencies for sexual assault victims. The Association believes that it is a violation of the victims' right to privacy to release the names of the victims or to have their past sexual history admitted as evidence in assault cases. The Association recognizes the importance of and urges the rehabilitation of the assailant and the protection of due process rights for both the victim and the assailant. (81, 91)

I-25. Human Relations in the School

The National Education Association believes that improved human relations is essential to the school environment. To improve human relations in all schools, the Association calls for —

a. School recruitment and staffing policies that will ensure culturally diverse school employees

b. Appropriate classroom and other student-related activities, particularly those that are responsive to the cultural diversity and historical backgrounds of our society

c. Further development of continuing education programs to educate school and community personnel

d. Reduction of the ratio of students to licensed staff. This reduction should be to the level teachers determine to be essential to improved learning

e. Development of ways to improve community-police and student-police relations through the joint efforts of school, community, and law enforcement agencies

f. Joint discussions to promote understanding of human and civil rights and responsibilities in all segments of society

g. Development and implementation of curricula that teach students about positive human relations. (72, 94)

I-26. Martin Luther King Day

The National Education Association believes that the attention of the people of the nation should be focused on the importance of human relations by conducting special activities. The Association recommends that state associations actively continue to seek the passage of legislation proclaiming Martin Luther King Day as a state holiday in every state. The Association encourages its affiliates and all school systems and educational institutions to plan observances of this date that will promote goodwill among all persons. (69, 95)

I-27. Freedom of Religion

The National Education Association believes that freedom of religion is a fundamental human right. The Association believes that choice of religion is an intensely personal decision. Instruction in religious doctrines and practices is best provided within a family setting and/or by religious institutions.

The Association believes that schools should teach the rights and responsibilities associated with the freedom of religion, the religious heritage and diversity of the United States, respect for the religion of others, and the historical and cultural influences of various world religions.

The Association believes that local school boards should adopt policies that govern religious activities on school property. Such policies must respect the separation of church and state; govern voluntary, student-led meetings with adult supervision before or after normal school hours; treat all religions on an equal basis; and protect the rights of students and education employees.

The Association opposes any federal legislation or mandate that would require school districts to schedule a moment of silence. The Association particularly opposes a moment of silence as a condition for receiving federal funds. (95)

I-28. Sectarian Practices in the School Program

The National Education Association believes that the constitutional provisions on the establishment of and the free exercise of religion in the First Amendment require that there be no sectarian practices in the public school program.

The Association opposes the imposition of sectarian practices in the public school program and urges its affiliates to do the same. (78, 86)

I-29. Gun-Free Schools and the Regulation of Deadly Weapons

The National Education Association believes that all students and educational employees must be allowed to learn and work in an environment free of unauthorized guns and other deadly weapons. Severe penalties should be enacted and strenuously enforced for criminal actions involving guns and other deadly weapons, especially in school settings, and for those who profit from the illegal sale, importation, and distribution of these weapons.

The Association also believes that strict prescriptive regulations are necessary for the manufacture, importation, distribution, sale and resale of handguns and ammunition magazines. The possession by the private sector of automatic weapons and military-style semiautomatic assault weapons should be illegal, except for historical and collection purposes which must be strictly regulated. A mandatory waiting period for a background check should occur prior to the sale of all firearms.

The Association further believes that gun owners should participate in educational programs that stress responsible ownership, including safe use and storage of guns. (82, 96)

I-30. Victims of a Crime

The National Education Association believes that victims of a crime should be treated with dignity and compassion, without the fear of intimidation. Victims and their families should be notified of and have the right to be present/represented at all hearings and legal proceedings involving the defendant/perpetrator.

The Association also believes that victims and their families must be made aware of and have free access to necessary services/programs. These services/programs must be funded by the appropriate government agencies. (87, 96)

I-31. Military Veterans

The National Education Association believes that many veterans of military conflicts are suffering physical, social, and psychological problems because of their involvement in combat and related military activities, the full effects of which are still not known. The Association urges that federal and state legislation continue to be enacted to increase benefits and programs, including retirement benefits, for these military veterans to meet their needs now and in the future. (81, 87)

I-32. Highway Safety

The National Education Association believes that people should be protected from death and injury that result from the operation of motor vehicles by drivers under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or other mind-altering substances. To this end, the Association urges its members and affiliates to —

a. Support enactment and enforcement of effective and equitable legislation regulating driving while under the influence.

b. Advocate appropriate educational experiences for students regarding the effects of driving while under the influence.

c. Support recognized community and school groups in their efforts to reduce death and injury from accidents caused by drivers under the influence.

d. Support legislation requiring mandatory restraint of all passengers in motor vehicles, excluding school buses. The legislation should require the use of seat belts for adults and minor children and approved car seats for infants.

e. Support legislation requiring the use of helmets for bicycle and motorcycle riders.

f. Advocate for the continued research and development of safety features and passive restraint systems for passengers in school buses and for the inclusion of those features shown to be effective. (82, 93)

I-33. Federal Support for Public Welfare

The National Education Association believes that conditions that increase reliance on public welfare must be alleviated. The Association also believes that the costs and operation of public welfare should be assumed by the federal government and be based on standards of human dignity. (71, 93)

I-34. Protection Against Age Harassment

The National Education Association believes that school employees should be protected from harassment because of age. The Association encourages its affiliates to work with local school districts and institutions of higher education to —

a. Establish strong policies that grant those at or approaching retirement age freedom in their options to continue education employment or to retire

b. Develop educational programs designed to help individuals recognize, understand, prevent, and combat harassment because of age

c. Develop and publicize a grievance procedure that encourages the reporting of incidents of harassment because of age, resolves complaints promptly, and protects the rights of all parties. (89)

I-35. Protection of Senior Citizens

The National Education Association urges that attention be brought to the plight of senior citizens who suffer physical, mental, and economic abuse.

The Association condemns those policies and practices tolerated at the state and federal levels that result in poor medical care; physical, mental, and economic abuse; excessive pharmaceutical charges; inadequate dietary programs; deteriorating living quarters; and untrained staff for patients and residents of nursing and retirement homes.

The Association supports legislation and consumer education to eliminate the use of unethical techniques, scare tactics, and misrepresentation to divest senior citizens of their financial resources.

The Association urges its affiliates to join in political action to bring about legislative and administrative reform at the state and national levels. (78, 87)

I-36. People Living with HIV/AIDS

The National Education Association believes that people living with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or with acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) should be ensured fair and equitable treatment allowing equal access to education, employment, living conditions, and all rights guaranteed by law. (94)

I-37. Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities

The National Education Association believes that school districts and Association affiliates should make their respective buildings accessible and adaptable to persons with disabilities. The Association further believes that all public buildings and voting places should be accessible and adaptable to persons with disabilities. (88, 92)

I-38. Protection of Persons with Mental Disabilities

The National Education Association believes that the human and civil rights of individuals with mental disabilities must be protected.

The Association further believes that individuals with mental disabilities who have committed criminal offenses should receive all diagnostic and/or psychological services that meet their needs and guarantee their right not to be abused while incarcerated. Further, the Association believes that individuals with mental disabilities should not be subjected to capital punishment. (89, 92)

I-39. Care of the Mentally Ill

The National Education Association believes that it is society's responsibility to provide quality care for individuals suffering from debilitating mental illness.

Such persons should have access, as needed, to primary hospital care, outpatient services, necessary medication, social services, and housing in the least restrictive environment.

Financial assistance for such care should be based upon the ability of the individual to pay. (86)

I-40. Elimination of Racial, Ethnic, and Religious Discrimination

The National Education Association is committed to the elimination of racial, ethnic, and religious discrimination in all its forms.

The Association condemns any system of racial discrimination and exploitation and believes that sanctions are both justified and necessary against countries that utilize or support such practices. (76, 96)

I-41. Institutional Discrimination

The National Education Association believes that organizations are strengthened by offering membership on a nondiscriminatory basis.

The Association shall not participate in programs sponsored by any organization and/or its auxiliary that deny membership to certain segments of our society on a discriminatory basis when such denials are not related to the stated purposes of the organization, nor shall the Association utilize the facilities of such organizations.

The Association urges its affiliates and members not presently holding

membership in such organizations to discontinue any involvement with such organizations and urges that its members not participate in, provide programs to, or join organizations utilizing exclusionary membership.

The Association urges its members now holding membership in such organizations to work actively from within for the total elimination of such exclusionary clauses. (74, 86)

I-42. Use of Prejudicial Terms and Symbols

The National Education Association deplores prejudice based on race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender, age, disability, size, marital status, or economic status and rejects the use of names, symbols, caricatures, emblems, logos, and mascots that promote such prejudice. (92, 94)

I-43. Hate-Motivated Violence

The National Education Association deplores incidents of hate-motivated physical and verbal attacks against individuals or groups because of their race, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, size, marital status, or economic condition. The Association further deplores materials that actively promote such incidents.

The Association urges its affiliates, in conjunction with community groups, to create an awareness of hate-motivated, violent activities and to develop programs to oppose them. The Association supports its affiliates in their efforts to bring about clear and consistent law enforcement to protect the civil and human rights of the victims of hate-motivated, violent actions. (91, 94)

I-44. Violence Against and Exploitation of Asians/Pacific Islanders

The National Education Association is committed to the elimination of racial and ethnic discrimination in all its forms. The Association deplores the resurgence of covert and overt anti-Asian/Pacific Islander sentiments, threats, and incidents of racially motivated physical and verbal attacks. The Association believes that community-based educational awareness programs should be developed in conjunction with Asian/Pacific Islander groups to create an awareness of this violence. The Association supports its affiliates in their efforts to bring about clear and consistent law enforcement to protect the civil and human rights of the victims of racial violence.

The Association deplores the exploitation of women by organizations that advertise mail-order brides in their catalogs. (84, 85)

I-45. Internment/Containment Policies

The National Education Association recognizes that restrictive and/or punitive action based on race or national origin is a violation of constitutional guarantees and is repugnant to the American ideals of life, liberty, and property.

The Association believes that the practice of internment/containment of racially identifiable segments of our newly immigrated and current populations must be stopped. (82, 93)

I-46. Reparation of Native American Remains

The National Education Association believes in the dignity of the dead and encourages laws to prevent the robbing of graves.

The Association believes that the remains of thousands of Native Americans in storage throughout the United States should be returned for interment to the tribes and/or areas from which they were taken. The Association further believes that American Indian sacred items in museum collections should be returned to the tribes of their origin. (89)

I-47. English as the Official Language

The National Education Association recognizes the importance of an individual's native language and culture and the need to promote and preserve them through instruction, public service announcements, and all other forms of communication.

The Association believes that, although English is the language of political and economic communication in the United States, efforts to legislate English as the official language disregard cultural pluralism; deprive those in need of education, social services, and employment; and must be challenged. (87, 93)

I-48. Inclusive Medical Studies

The National Education Association believes that women and members of racial minority groups must be included in the samples of all medical studies, surveys, and research purporting to yield results applicable to all segments of a population. (91)

I-49. Sexual Harassment

The National Education Association recognizes that sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination or abuse.

The Association believes that classroom teachers, faculty, staff, and students should be protected from sexual harassment. The Association encourages its affiliates to work with local school districts and institutions of higher education to —

a. Establish strong policies defining and prohibiting sexual harassment

b. Develop educational programs designed to help people recognize, understand, prevent, combat, and eliminate sexual harassment

c. Develop and publicize a grievance procedure that encourages the reporting of incidents of sexual harassment, resolves complaints promptly, and protects the rights of all parties. (88, 94)

I-50. Equal Opportunity for Women

The National Education Association insists that all persons, regardless of gender, be given equal opportunity for employment, promotion, compensation (including equal pay for comparable worth), and leadership in all activities.

The Association supports the proposed Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which guarantees that equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state because of gender. The Association urges its affiliates to support ratification of such an amendment. The Association also supports the enactment and full funding of the Women's Educational Equity Act.

The Association believes that the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission must have cease-and-desist authority to act in all cases of discrimination based on race, creed, color, age, national origin, sexual orientation, and gender.

The Association urges governing boards and education associations to eliminate discriminatory practices against women in employment, promotion, and compensation. Personnel policies must include family leave, maternity leave, paternity leave, leave for adoption of a child, child-care leave, and professional leave which encourages women to participate in professional growth experiences and to prepare for administrative and executive positions.

The Association urges national, state, and local agencies to include research specifically related to women and their health problems and concerns.

The Association further urges professional associations at all levels to adopt policies that ensure women equal access to elective, appointive, and staff positions.

The Association urges the establishment of women's education committees in local and state associations as a vehicle for implementation of equal opportunity for women.

The Association believes that sexism and sex discrimination must be eliminated and endorses the use of nonsexist language. (69, 93)

I-51. Personal Relationships in Higher Education

The National Education Association recognizes that in institutions of higher education adult students and educators may establish personal relationships. However, such relationships should be voluntary and not be used to coerce or influence others for personal advantage. Thus, the Association believes that sexual relationships between a faculty member and a student currently enrolled in the faculty member's course, or under the supervision or direction of any higher education employee, are unprofessional. The Association urges its affiliates in institutions of higher education to establish strong policies declaring such relationships unprofessional. (89, 94)

I-52. Minority-Owned Businesses

The National Education Association believes that minority-owned businesses should be encouraged. The Association urges the federal government to initiate and continue policies that encourage minority-owned businesses. (89)

I-53. Integration in the Public Schools

The National Education Association believes that it is imperative that full integration of the nation's schools be effected.

The Association recognizes that acceptable integration plans will include affirmative action programs and a variety of devices, such as geographic realignment, pairing of schools, grade pairing, and satellite and magnet schools. Some arrangements may require busing of students in order to comply with established guidelines adhering to the letter and spirit of the law.

The Association urges its affiliates to encourage school boards to study and consider seriously the negative impact on minority students when schools located in minority neighborhoods are targeted for closing.

The Association will assist its affiliates to assure that education employees, parents, and students are involved in the development of plans designed to achieve integration. The Association urges state and federal agencies to provide funds necessary to implement integration programs, including funds for student transportation. The Association also urges participation in citizen advisory committees — consisting of members designated by the local education association, parents, and representatives of community organizations, business, clergy, and media — that reflect the ethnic makeup of the community in developing, implementing, and evaluating student desegregation plans.

The Association believes that integrated schools must provide students with equal access to all curricular and extracurricular programs and to technological equipment and knowledge.

The Association opposes any attempts to delay or impede implemen-

tation of desegregation orders and will, therefore, resist efforts of school boards to resegregate integrated schools.

The Association will continue to oppose vigorously the systematic displacement or demotion of minority, especially Black, teachers and administrators to achieve integration. The Association also opposes actions of boards of education to finance integration plans through reduction of school staff. In addition, the Association will oppose the capricious reassignment and displacement of Hispanic teachers and administrators because of desegregation and bilingual programs. (69, 93)

I-54. Ethnic-Minority Educators

The National Education Association believes that multiracial teaching staffs are essential to the operation of schools. The Association deplores the current trend of diminishing numbers of ethnic-minority educators.

The Association urges local and state affiliates and appropriate governing bodies and agencies to work to increase the number of ethnic-minority teachers and administrators to a percentage at least equal to, but not limited to, the percentage of the ethnic minority in the general population. The Association further urges U.S. Department of Defense schools actively to recruit and hire ethnic-minority educators. (79, 89)

J. OBTAIN FOR ITS MEMBERS THE BENEFITS OF AN INDEPENDENT, UNITED EDUCATION PROFESSION

J-1. Strong Professional Associations

The National Education Association believes that an independent and professional organization is vital to its members and affiliates. This independence must be safeguarded in any alignments with other organizations.

The Association further believes that the unity of effort of a professional organization promotes the interests of its members and advances a strong, healthy learning environment. (74, 94)

J-2. Supporting Locals in Jeopardy

The National Education Association believes that assistance should be afforded to those affiliates that exist within concentrated territories of competing organizations. The Association encourages its affiliates to initiate and support programs that will strengthen and enhance the local organizational structure and promote membership growth within the Association. Continuous communications and cooperation of local, state, and national bodies are keys to the success of the local affiliates in building solid professional organizations.

The Association believes that assistance should be given to those local associations that have been —

a. Targeted for take-over efforts
b. Taken over by competing organizations
c. The object of "association busting."

Members of affiliated locals that are not the bargaining agent must be provided an effective means of processing grievances. (76, 96)

J-3. Membership Participation in the Association

The National Education Association believes that every member has the right and obligation to participate fully in the Association. The opportunity to participate in the Association must be afforded every member without fear, intimidation, or retribution.

The Association also believes that school policies should provide released time without loss of pay to those who are fulfilling leadership responsibilities, attending meetings, or participating in other Association activities. (69, 94)

J-4. Minority Participation in the Association

The National Education Association believes that at every phase of governance and on all decisionmaking levels of the Association there should be minority participation at least proportionate to the identified ethnic-minority population of that geographic level.

Ethnic minorities should be included as candidates for positions at all levels. The Association should promote minority participation in program development and should employ minorities and women in staff positions consistent with Association affirmative action policies.

The Association also believes that its affiliates should maintain a commitment to organizational policies and programs that promote the training and involvement of minorities at all levels of the organization.

The Association believes that there is a need for systematic evaluation of minority participation at all levels. (72, 96)

J-5. Student Member Participation

The National Education Association believes that eligible students should have the opportunity to join the Association. The Association further believes that students should be encouraged to participate in the Association at the local, state, and national levels. Preprofessional and leadership training should be priorities.

Further, the Association believes that local advisers should be members of the Association. (91, 94)

J-6. Retired Member Participation

The National Education Association believes that its retired members should have the opportunity to participate in the Association at the local, state, and national levels.

The Association further believes that retired members are a valuable asset in furthering the goals of the Association in areas in which their years of experience have lead to their cumulative expertise. (76, 96)

J-7. Promotion of Teaching as a Career Choice

The National Education Association supports the establishment of organizations involving students interested in the field of education as a profession. The Association believes that its state affiliates should promote the establishment of such organizations at all age levels and encourage its members to serve as advisers. (80, 96)

J-8. Universal Education Employee Rights

The National Education Association supports the efforts of all associations of education employees in the world to secure basic rights for their members. The Association commends those education employees and students around the world who champion academic freedom and campaign against illiteracy, especially when their activities must be conducted under oppressive and often life-threatening conditions.

The Association stands ready to help all associations of education employees obtain their basic rights as listed in the NEA resolutions.

The Association condemns all governments for their roles in any acts of injustice against education employees and their organizations and, thus, the children and youth of those countries. The Association urges the U.S. government to refrain from supporting any governments that suppress academic freedom and literacy.

The Association urges the U.S. government to refrain from any plan for overt or covert action that would destabilize or overthrow any government or would adversely affect a government's successful campaign to improve literacy, equal education support, health care, and living and working conditions. (81, 95)

J-9. Organizations of Other Nations

The National Education Association believes that a strong international community of educators is necessary to promote international understanding and to defend the interests of education employees in all countries. The Association actively supports the Education International and will continue to cooperate with professional education organizations of other nations. (69, 95)

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